

**THE PARADOX OF CONFRONTATION:  
EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE ON THE AUDIENCE EFFECTS OF PROTEST**

by

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University of Pittsburgh, 2016

Do protests increase or decrease political engagement among the general public? Despite the fact that social movements so often aspire to persuade and engage civil society, scholars have largely neglected these consequences of protest activity. I argue that protest is a double-edged sword. People may become enthusiastic and engaged when they hear of protests through the news, but they disengage when faced with an actual protest. This suggestion challenges the vast majority of social movement literature, which is highly aware of the protesters' need to occupy and interrupt public life in order to capture an audience, but widely assumes that the public does not mind the interruption. This dissertation considers the possibility that the public begrudges its role as a captive audience and focuses more on the inconvenience of the event than the message. I approach this research question through a combination of two experimental designs and observational data. First, I embed a vignette experiment into a baseline phone survey in Mexico City. This experiment treats individuals with crafted news stories about protests that have randomized characteristics. The second experiment tests a different type of protest exposure, i.e., real confrontation. In this experiment, all respondents from the baseline were invited to take part in face-to-face interviews at designated times and places. Respondents in the treatment groups are interviewed during one of two protests, while respondents in the control group were interviewed on a day with no protests. All of the treatments in the vignette and field experiments take advantage of real protests that arose

in opposition to the apparent killing of 43 student teachers from the Ayotzinapa teachers' college in southern Mexico. Then, using new techniques to isolate and test competing causal mechanisms, I examine the specific mediators – emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy - that might link protests to political engagement. To complement the experimental results, I test the external validity of my findings with municipal-level data in Brazil, a country that shares similar patterns of protest activity with Mexico but differs in its protest geography.

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## PREFACE

When I think about the time I spent wandering around Mexico City with a wad of questionnaires stuffed under my arm, hunting around for any protester who would talk to me, and counting my pesos to see if I could pay for *one more pilot*, I find it hard to believe that this dissertation actually ended. It would be an absurd understatement to say I could not have done it alone.

The very first person I need to thank is the person who lived every step of it with me: my husband, Néstor (Camilo) Castañeda. I could not have written this dissertation without his help, his guidance, his support, and his love. To be clear, he hated the whole process. Even when we were living in different countries, he could feel the pressure and size of this project just as deeply as I could, and he wanted nothing more than for things to be easier for me. But he was always there to remind me that there was a light at the end. For all of those days and nights when you pushed me to do all that I could and accept what I couldn't: thank you.

I defended my proposal in 2012 with big plans of quasi-experiments with *real* protests, but those ideas eventually looked unrealistic with limited time and funds. There were many times when I wanted to narrow my scope and use a more traditional (i.e., less expensive) design, and I have to thank my two mentors, Barry Ames and Steve Finkel, for pushing me to stay with real protests. Barry, who believes that political science research belongs in the real world, would never entertain the idea of a smaller project for long. More importantly, he helped to pay for airfare so that I could afford to go into the field. He has no idea how important it was to me that he never

gave up on me or on this project. Similarly, Steve always said that a survey experiment was nice, but that I could not “hang my dissertation” on it. It is because of these two that I held out long enough to conduct the full design, and I could never thank them enough for telling me, “no,” so many times. Of course, I also thank them for the insightful comments and suggestions they provided during the writing stage. I also want to thank the other members of my committee, Jon Hurwitz and Chappell Lawson, for their personal support and helpful comments.

For her help with fieldwork, I owe tremendous thanks to Leticia Juárez and the team at Beltrán y Asociados. Leticia and her team conducted the phone survey and the face-to-face interviews, but she helped in countless other ways as well. She meticulously went over the Spanish translations of the questionnaire, she identified the perfect places to conduct the face-to-face interviews, she kept her ear to the ground for news of protest updates, and she went out of her way to make our respondents comfortable. She delivered a high-quality product that far exceeded my budget, and I could never thank her enough.

I am also very grateful to everyone who facilitated my preliminary fieldwork and pilot tests. I want to thank Brian Phillips, Carolina Garriga, and María Inclán from CIDE for welcoming me so warmly to Mexico City. I also want to Eduardo Guisa Arizmendi and Malagy Palacios for helping me to field the pilot surveys. Finally, I could not have conducted any of the pilots without help from the political activists who were willing to share their plans and itineraries with me. In particular, I want to thank Israel Solorio for allowing me to see the academic and practical sides of political activism first-hand.

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## 1.0 CONFRONTING THE PUBLIC:

### THE PUBLIC SPHERE AS THE “BLACK BOX” OF ACTIVISM

*You may well ask, “Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, etc? Isn’t negotiation a better path?” You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored... Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, we must see the need of having nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men to rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood. So the purpose of the direct action is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation.*

*Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”  
(King 1963, p. 4-5)*

From his jail cell in Birmingham, Alabama, Reverend Martin Luther King received a letter from a group of clergymen advising him to put an end to the protests and move the civil rights battle to the courts. In response, King thought carefully about the fundamental differences between civil disobedience and institutionalized demand-making. He maintained that political protest is a powerful weapon *precisely because* it forces the general public to confront difficult issues. Protest creates “a tension in the mind” and “a situation so crisis-packed” among the masses until negotiation becomes the only way out. That is, protests thrust the broader public - even those who never join the movement - into the political debate until elected officials have no choice but to respond to their agitated constituents.



Protest is a very different from electoral behavior. Moving beyond the obvious fact that protest is a collective act while voting is not, the public nature of protest leads to a number of other important dissimilarities. First, protest takes place in the public sphere while voting takes place privately, resulting in very different audiences for the two forms of political behavior. While voters send messages directly to politicians, protesters' messages are cast into the public and to anyone who will listen. Second, voting takes place on assigned days and times that are scheduled by politicians and public officials. Meanwhile, it is impossible to know precisely when protests will occur and, in most democracies, politicians do not intentionally schedule them.<sup>1</sup> This implies that many protests are unsolicited, and even undesirable. Third, elections take place in the context of campaigns, where political parties use specifically allocated resources to summon voters and publicize the event. Protesters are not so fortunate; they must create their own publicity and often must do so by interrupting day-to-day life in public places.

And yet, the vast majority of the literature on protest consequences treats protests very similarly to elections. Like electoral outcomes, protest outcomes are most often limited to turnout/participation (e.g., McCarthy and Zald 1977; Klandermans 1984), policy changes (e.g., Baumgartner and Mahoney 2005; Piven 2006), and regime turnover (e.g., Skocpol 1979; Kuran 1991; Moore 1993 [1966]; Beissinger 2013). There are certainly some outcomes that are protest-specific. For example, literature in sociology pays a great deal of attention to organization-level outcomes, such as the emergence of counter-movements (e.g., Useem and Zald 1982; Rao, Morrill,

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<sup>1</sup> In some countries, it is common to have massive social movements that are tightly affiliated with a political party. One of this is the Peronista Party's affiliation with protest groups in Argentina (Norden 2011). However, even in these cases, political parties do not schedule *all* protests, only those that are organized by their supporting movements.

and Zald 2000) and the cycles of social movement mobilization (e.g., Tarrow 1994; McAdam 1995).

But surely, the public nature of protests leads to public outcomes as well. The influence that protests exert over political decision-makers and other activists is well-documented, but we must also consider the influence they have over their communities. Given the fact that only a small proportion of the population attends even the largest protests, it is critically important for a protest to encourage engagement among the non-participating audience as well. Protesters may not explicitly state their goals to influence the community, but it is hardly disputable that many protests in democratic countries attempt to trigger tension and political engagement among citizens. After all, as general engagement in politics increases, so too does the pressure on political decision-makers. Similarly, as tensions rise, we expect the blind acceptance of the status quo to fall. This aspiration is made pointedly vivid in the introductory quote by Martin Luther King, who maintains that “nonviolent gadflies” are the only mechanism that can generate enough pressure and trigger enough dissatisfaction to necessitate policy change (King 1963, p. 4).

Furthermore, empirical scholarship in sociology has found that the causal linkages between protest dynamics and policy outcomes often depend on public opinion. This literature tends to focus on the effects of protests in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>2</sup> Burstein (1985) demonstrates that, without favorable public opinion, the civil right protests of the 1960s would have had very little capacity to influence policy. Through a time-series analysis of the same set of protests and the same policy outcomes, Santoro (2002) devised a more dynamic hypothesis. He found that protests played a critical role in the early stages of the policy agenda, and then public opinion gained momentum

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<sup>2</sup> For literature beyond this time-frame, please see Amenda, Caren, and Olasky (2005) for a careful analysis of social protest and public opinion for the U.S. pension movement of the 1930s and 1940s.

until the eventual passage of the 1972 Equal Employment Opportunity Act. Similarly, a longitudinal analysis of the 1972 Equal Rights Amendment concluded that public opinion mattered a great deal for movement success, particularly in electorally competitive contexts (Soule and Olzak 2007). While numerous causal mechanisms might link protests to policy outcomes (Burstein and Linton 2002), most evidence supports the expectation that protests have a stronger effect when they operate in conjunction with public opinion (Agnone 2007).

Finally, even if protesters have absolutely no intention of influencing the community, the public nature of protest nearly necessitates some public response. As protesters attempt to address policy-makers through the media or physical confrontations in public places, the public is inadvertently exposed to their claims and messages. At face value, the necessarily public nature of protest activity would lend itself easily to public response. Protests constitute a form of political participation that wants to be seen and experienced by an audience (Benford and Hunt 1992; McAdam 1996). Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow put it aptly when they describe protests as ‘performances,’ where the role of the audience is critical (2007: 12). The theatricality at the heart of protest activity arises from the necessity of attracting attention. Protesters must create their own publicity and cause a scene to attract the attention of their target audiences. Through traffic jams, loud noises, and congregations in important public spaces, they seek to attract the most attention from bystanders as is possible. Consequently, protests force individuals to confront political issues regardless of self-selection. A person may not listen to political news, but he/she cannot avoid a traffic jam caused by thousands of people demanding higher wages, gay rights, or the ousting of political leaders. Thus, protests have strong potential to influence the relationship between individuals and politics.

Despite the fact that social movements so often aspire to mold, engage, and interrupt civil society, these consequences of protest activity are largely neglected in the literature (Giugni 1998). While empirical analysis reveals a great deal about the consequences that protests have on state, economic, and political outcomes, very little is known about the ways in which protests can shape public opinion and political behavior. Only recently have scholars begun to discuss the capacity of protests to drive public opinion, but many questions remain regarding what these effects are, which protests are most likely to induce them, which audiences are most receptive, and what are the mechanisms underlying these effects.

## **1.1 OVERVIEW: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

This dissertation contributes to the recent work on protests and public opinion by exploring the causal relationship between protest activity and political engagement. Do protests increase or decrease political engagement? Does exposure to protest lead people to read about or discuss political issues? Do they bring people to participate more in electoral politics? Under what conditions do these effects take place? Finally, what is the psychological mechanism by which protests influence public engagement? I argue that protest can act as a double-edged sword. While the general public might become enthusiastic and engaged with the idea of social movements, the same people tend to disengage when faced with an actual, noisy, confrontational protest.

I examine this question through a mixed-methods empirical approach. Two experimental designs contribute the lion's share of the empirical evidence. The first is a vignette experiment embedded into an original phone survey in Mexico City. This experiment treats individuals with news stories about protests with randomized characteristics. The second is a quasi-experiment that

tests a different type of protest exposure: real confrontation. For this experiment, respondents are invited to take part in face-to-face interviews at designated times and places. Respondents in the treatment groups are interviewed during one of two protests, and respondents in the control group are interviewed on a day with no protests. The first protest was quite small (approximately 300 participants), and the second was much larger (5,000 participants). All of the experimental treatments piggyback off of real protests that arose in opposition to the apparent killing of 43 student teachers from the Ayotzinapa teachers' college in southern Mexico. In total, 1202 respondents in Mexico City responded to the phone survey, and 89 of those individuals participated in the follow-up face-to-face interviews. To complement the experimental results, I test the generalizability and external validity of my findings with municipal-level data in a different context, Brazil, which shares similar patterns of protest activity with Mexico but differs in its protest geography (Bruhn 2008).

I find that protests yield starkly two-sided effects. Exposure to a news story about protests increases the individual's willingness to talk about a political issue, sign a petition, and vote. Exposure to a real street demonstration decreases the individual's willingness to talk about a political issue, protest, and vote. It is the type of exposure that differentiates between these effects, rather than the characteristics of the protest treatments. Any demonstration in real life – regardless of its size - decreases engagement, but a protest in the news - regardless of its size and level of violence - increases engagement. I then use causal mediation analysis to determine that these effects are psychologically transmitted through emotions and, for some respondents, through conflict aversion. Finally, the comparative analysis of Brazilian municipalities largely concurs with these findings. In this chapter, I use observational data to further verify the two-sided effects, finding that protests that are more likely to be confronted by greater numbers of bystanders – large

protests, violent protests, and protests in small cities – result in disengagement, while their less disruptive counterparts increase engagement among their communities.

This dissertation contributes to the field's understanding of protest outcomes in several ways. First, it adds to the new and important literature suggesting that protests can change politics in more meaningful ways than simply winning and losing battles with policymakers. Within this potentially fruitful and certainly understudied range of outcomes, I conclude that protests can have very real consequences that, though possibly unrelated to protesters' initial goals, can have significant implications for the movement's success and failure. Some of these consequences are even counterproductive to protester's goals. Second, it is the first research of its kind to theorize *why* protests may or may not influence the public. Extant literature tends to examine the public consequences of protests through a *black box*, in which causal mechanisms are secondary to demonstrating that a correlation exists. After comparing the mediating effects of a number of theoretically rich causal mechanisms, I find that the most persuasive mechanism is the emotional transmission of protest effects, and there is some evidence for the conditional indirect effects of conflict aversion. Third, this is the first analysis to take seriously the heterogeneity of protests and examine how different types of protests and forms of exposure might yield opposing consequences for political behavior. The scarcity of research on the heterogeneous effects of protests is likely due to methodological difficulties, but the empirical design of the project allows for a much more precise examination of protest characteristics and environments than has ever been attempted previously. This brings me to the methodological contribution of this dissertation. To my knowledge, there is only one prior field experiment on protests (McClendon 2014), and my dissertation is the first that examines protest as an independent variable. Given the complex and

highly confounded nature of protest emergence, this dissertation illustrates the potential of experimental designs to answer challenging questions on protest contexts and political behavior.

The main substantive implications of this dissertation are two-fold. First, although public disruption allows protesters to achieve greater leverage with policymakers, it could be counterproductive for protesters in the long-run. While disruption often brings targets to the negotiating table, it might cause potential voters and constituencies to be *less willing* to take action and get involved. On the other hand, protests that can attract significant media attention can actually have strong engaging effects. In reality, this creates a very difficult balance for protesters to maintain because the protests that tend to attract the media are often the most disruptive. This could partially explain why it can be so difficult for protesters to maintain public engagement long enough for change to take place.

Second, the actual tactics of protesters seem to make very little difference for the public response. An aggregate analysis of protests – as exemplified by the final chapter on Brazil – might suggest that protest characteristics such as size and the occurrence of violent skirmishes with the police allow activists some control over the effects of their protests. However, an empirical design that controls for the confounding elements of protest exposure finds that these characteristics are not sufficient to determine the public response. Quite counterintuitively, the protest described as massive and violent in the news report treatment increased engagement quite substantially. Meanwhile, the real protest treatment that was small and peaceful still resulted in disengagement. This suggests that public response is largely a function of exposure, a factor over which protesters have very limited control.

There are also important methodological implications to this research. This dissertation argues for the use of combinations of methods to understand complex causal relationships. I use three basic forms of data collection – a vignette experiment, a quasi-experiment in the field, and observational data – and each one would lead to very different conclusions if conducted independently. The vignette experiment suggests that protests, regardless of their characteristics, engage the public; the field experiment finds that protests, again regardless of their characteristics, disengage the public; an analysis of observational data implies that protests may engage or disengage but with effects conditional on the protests’ characteristics. The causal story *only* comes together when all of these methodological approaches are viewed in concert.

This dissertation serves as a cautionary tale for political science research. A great deal of recent work in political science attempts to reduce complex political phenomena to clean and highly controlled experimental designs, often at the expense of causal complexity (Barabas and Jerit 2010; Franco, Malhotra and Simonovits 2015). There is also an increasingly wide divide between quantitative work and qualitative work (Brady and Collier 2004; Mahoney and Goertz 2006). In this dissertation, the contrasting findings for the two experiments and observational analysis demonstrate the importance of a diverse set of treatments and methods that seek to replicate real-life stimuli and make generalizable claims. While a researcher might actually find significant results from highly controlled study (like a factorial design in a vignette experiment), it is not always obvious what those results tell us about the public's response to real political situations.



## 1.2 ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation aims to build a persuasive case for the two-sided effects of protests. I proceed through the following structure: I begin with the theoretical foundations, then show that these effects exist, then demonstrate *why* these effects exist, and then conclude with evidence that my findings are more broadly generalizable.

In Chapter 2, I will present the theoretical underpinnings for the public effects of protests. Although this is the first attempt to analyze the effects of protests on public engagement, there is a great deal to learn from the literature that examines protests' mobilizing effects on participants and the burgeoning literature on protests and public opinion. I move a step beyond this literature to argue that bystanders may respond positively *or negatively* to protest activity, which is a position rarely taken in social movement literature. From there, I generate some hypotheses on why protests might engage and disengage the public. I focus on three causal mechanisms: emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy.

Chapter 3 introduces experimental designs I developed to test these expectations. The aim is to propose and explain methodological solutions to questions that have been previously inaccessible to social movement scholars. Specifically, I introduce the multi-pronged empirical design and its individual components: the vignette treatments and field treatments. I also use this chapter to justify why I chose Mexico City to be my geographic focus and why I selected the Ayotzinapa protests for my treatments. I then describe the questionnaires item-by-item, and I provide summary statistics of my sample in terms of pre-treatment indicators.

The fourth chapter offers the first evidence for the engaging and disengaging effects of protests. The chapter is divided into two broad sections – one for the vignette experiment and one

for the field experiment. For both experiments, I explain the methodological analysis and then discuss results. After I find that the two experiments yield widely different results, I attempt to rule out the possibility that the results emerged from selection bias. I also take the opportunity in this chapter to assess the potential moderating effects of protest support on subsequent engagement. Ultimately, this chapter provides the first empirical evidence that protest can engage the wider public in political issues, but actual confrontation with protests can be counterproductive to this end.

In Chapter 5, I dig deeper into the causal relationship by examining the theorized causal mediators that link protests to political engagement among the public. In particular, I focus on three sets of mediators: emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy. I then proceed sequentially in the order of causality, first demonstrating the effect of the treatments on the mediators, then the mediators on the outcomes, and then the indirect causal effects of the treatments on the outcomes through the mediators. For conflict aversion, which might be conceptualized as a mediator or a moderator, I take a closer look at the conditional indirect effects. Ultimately, I find fairly weak evidence for most of the causal processes, but most of the evidence supports the emotional mechanism. There is also some weak but theoretically compelling evidence for the conflict mechanism. Although few treatments have significant effects on conflict aversion, I find that the desire to avoid political conflict has strong potential to drive disengagement. I also find that individuals who enjoy conflict are more likely to respond through this mechanism.

Next, I move from the individual-level to the community-level. In Chapter 6, I extend the findings from Mexico City to 60 randomly-sampled Brazilian municipalities. I argue that Brazil is the ideal case to test the generalizability of the experimental results. Modifying the causal expectations to accommodate observational data, I merge individual data from a longitudinal

survey in Brazil with original data on protests from sampled municipalities. I find that the most confrontational protests – large and violent protests, and protests in small cities - lead to disengagement. Meanwhile, protests that are reported in the media but are unlikely to result in physical confrontations increase engagement among the community.

In my concluding chapter, I take a step back and discuss the dissertation as a whole. I summarize my expectations and findings, and I discuss where the two are congruent and incongruent. I also suggest some ideas for future research on protest audiences and causal mechanisms. The concluding chapter also includes a discussion of substantive and methodological implications from the dissertation. Substantively, I address what these findings mean for the fields of comparative politics and political behavior, and I speculate on more practical implications for protesters and protest audiences. Methodologically, I emphasize the importance of mixed methods and multiple treatments, and I reflect on the challenges of conducting a field-intensive project on a difficult topic like protest.

## **2.0 THE THEORETICAL LINKS BETWEEN PROTESTS AND ENGAGEMENT**

I argue that protests can trigger either political engagement or disengagement among the public. For this dissertation, I operationalize political engagement as a broad term that is meant to encompass disparate forms of political activity (Berger 2009). It is conceptually more expansive than political participation, which is typically associated with political activities that attempt to influence policy. Such activities tend to include protest, voting, and contacting politicians (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978; Brady 1999). While engagement includes political participation, it also includes deliberative activities – such as discussion and political learning – where the individual takes part in politics with no expectation of changing political outcomes. While participatory and deliberative forms of engagement are certainly related, they have important differences in scope and manifestation (Ekman and Amna 2012). Furthermore, political engagement can take forms that either work within electoral institutions or contest those institutions through protest. As a wide-ranging concept, I frame the dependent variable generally to capture all of the possible components of engagement.

To be clear, this dissertation will not make an argument about collective action or about joining a particular protest. While it is certainly interesting and important to ask why individuals mobilize collectively, the question I pose is more broadly focused on the effects among audience members. Do protests influence their communities? Do people who see protests or hear about protests change their behavior? This dissertation is also not a comprehensive story about why some people decide to join a protest and others do not. Protest participation is one outcome of protests,

and it is included among the dependent variables, but adding more people to the protest is also not the *only* outcome. Protesters often seek or require a wider range of engagement to further their causes. Can protests increase awareness and attention on particular issues? Do they raise discussions about issues? Do they encourage non-participants to engage further in the political process and make demands?

There is reason to believe that protest activity can engender political engagement among the public. Indeed, literature in sociology and political science can attest to the potentially powerful mobilizing consequences of protest activity among participants. This literature examines the consequences that protests have on individual protesters, concluding that protests directly and indirectly mobilize individuals to participate in social movements. This work is fundamentally rooted in scholarship on Germany in the late 1980s and the US in the 1960s. Evidence from panel studies in East and West Germany suggests that protests, like other forms of participation, directly and indirectly increase the likelihood of subsequent participation in politics (Finkel 1987; Finkel and Muller 1998; Opp 1998). Protest activity changes both one's perceptions of efficacy and system support (significant predictors of later participation) in addition to creating a robust direct effect that persists for all model specifications.

Importantly, this literature suggests that the response to protest might not always be positive. Using panel data from West Germany, Finkel (1987) finds that prior voting tends to increase the likelihood of voting as well as increasing system support and political efficacy. For political protest, on the other hand, likelihood of subsequent protest increases, but support of the political system *decreases*. Given the important role that this variable has for future voting and political participation, these findings suggest that the experience of protesting could have negative implications for conventional forms of participation. These findings do not hold for all forms of

protest; they are only statistically significant for violent protests. Peaceful protest was found to have very small and insignificant (although still negative) effects on political attitudes. Meanwhile, other attitudinal antecedents for engagement - such as political efficacy - were found to increase after participating in protests (Finkel 1987; Finkel and Muller 1998). Taken together, protest participation does seem to increase subsequent political engagement, but the increase in efficacy and decrease in system support suggests that the engagement would likely be confrontational.

Sociological literature complements these findings by analyzing the duration of these consequences. Scholars follow the New Left activists as they age, and they find that the mobilizing consequences of protest activity tend to be long-lasting. For as long as two decades after initial participation, former activists continue to promote leftist attitudes (Marwell et al. 1987), self-identify as liberals (Fendrich and Tarleau 1973), and remain mobilized in social movements (Fendrich and Krauss 1978; Jennings and Niemi 1981; Fendrich and Lovoy 1988; McAdam 1989).

In addition, extant literature suggests that protests may yield behavioral consequences outside of the immediate participants. Scholars of protest diffusion have found substantial evidence for “cycles of contention,” or periods in which movements in one location spark chain reactions where new social movements and protest groups emerge at the peak of a protest wave (Klandermans 1990; Tarrow 1994, 2012). These cycles have proven to be flexible and dynamic, spreading protest over space and time by inciting contention and mobilizing new sectors (Shorter and Tilly 1974; Rudé 1981; Snow and Benford 1988). At the micro-level, these cycles facilitate individual participation through informational cascades (Granovetter 1978; Schelling 1978). That is, each individual’s decision to participate hinges on the decisions of others and the resulting balance of collective costs and benefits. Then as information of successful protest spreads, so too does protest (Andrews and Biggs 2006).

The act of protesting can make subsequent engagement more likely through a number of mechanisms, but some scholars highlight the role of “selective incentives” (Finkel and Muller 1998). Although these incentives could be material, they are usually emotional or psychological benefits that participants receive through the act of protest. Solidarity is an example of a selective incentive that has is lauded in social movement literature for being a powerful and consequential driver of further mobilization (Jasper 1998; Yang 2000). Social movement scholars argue that the act of forming a group and working together triggers an emotional reaction, forms collective identity, strengthens bonds within the group, and makes the group more resilient against attacks from the outside (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). It is the emotion that builds the momentum required for social movements to exist and be successful, and movement organizers deliberately elicit this emotion through values, symbolic objects, stories, and personae in order to maintain engagement. This is reinforced in “high-risk” movements, where fear for one’s community elicits support and, ultimately, political participation (Goodwin and Pfaff 2001). For the most part, however, organizers strive to build solidarity in order to make protest a pleasurable experience for participants (Epstein 1991).

## **2.1 PROTESTS AND THE PUBLIC AUDIENCE**

Thus, with the exception of Finkel’s (1987) conflicting findings on the psychological antecedents of participation, the overwhelming evidence on protests’ behavioral effects suggests that protests increase engagement. They mobilize their own participants for long periods of time, they tend to generate cycles of collective action, and they trigger psychological benefits that encourage further participation. The question remains how protests might engage or disengage the

public. For this dissertation, the public is considered to be the set of individuals who are exposed or have the potential to be exposed to the protest in some way – either directly or indirectly – but are not participating in the protest. In principle, no other variable connects individuals within the public to one another. They are highly diverse, and their unique backgrounds and personalities shape their individual perceptions of the protest (Gamson 2004; Rucht 2004).

How might protests increase political engagement among such a vastly diverse and disconnected public? This question has never been addressed directly. Parallel to protesters, who experience psychological and emotional benefits from the protest experience (Finkel and Muller 1998; Jasper 1998; Yang 2000), those who are outside the group may still experience some of the participatory externalities of protest activity. Many scholars contend that political participation diffuses across individuals. That is, exposure to the political activity of people around you encourages personal participation. There is an abundance of empirical evidence from various perspectives to support this claim. Social capital, for example, is one mechanism by which contextual participation fosters individual participation. Social capital theorists contend that individuals learn how to engage in politics from a broader culture of participation (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1993; Putnam 2000). Although there is a good deal of controversy regarding the tangible consequences of social capital (Booth and Richard 1998; Brehm and Rahn 1997), there is also some persuasive evidence that contextual participation encourages individual participation (Alford and Scoble 1968; Krishna 2002; Ryfe 2005).

Importantly, scholars find that the contagion of participation does not depend entirely on close ties or social networks. While social ties with political participants are effective at spreading engagement (Leighley 1991; Kenny 1992; McClurg 2003; Bond et al. 2012), close ties are not necessary for diffusion to take place. Casual observation of political participation has been found



to be a significant driver of individual participation (Cho and Rudolph 2008). Using spatial econometric techniques, Cho and Rudolph find that when individuals are casually exposed to their neighbor's campaign paraphernalia, discussions, or other overt political activity, they glean information about participatory norms in their community. The spread of this information leads to participatory contagion outside the constraints of established social networks.

The public nature of protest behavior lends itself well to this type of observational contagion. Unlike most forms of political participation, which are private, protests are strategically designed to be observed. If small signals such as bumper stickers and yard signs are sufficient to spread political participation (Cho and Rudolph 2008), public demonstrations and marches are likely to trigger ripples of political engagement. In accordance with the diffusion mechanism, individuals who are exposed to protests receive important information about the norms of political engagement in their environment. Even if the exposed individuals are largely ignorant or unaware of the protesters' claims, casual observation of the protest indicates that a political issue has attracted crowds of citizens to the streets. This leads me to believe that the engaging effects of protests may not be limited to activists; the public audience may also become more politically engaged as a result of protest activity.

This is not the first time that scholars have attempted to examine the effects that protests can have upon the public audience. Rather than identifying the effect of protests on political engagement, prior work has sought to identify the effect of protests on public opinion. The first study to empirically assess the capacity of protest to shape public opinion was published as early as the 1970s. Berkowitz (1973) collects data on large, anti-war protests (all consisting of more than 10,000 participants) from news reports, and compares trends of protest activity with public opinion taken in Gallup polls between 1965 and 1971. While most of the public opinion indicators are not

significantly influenced by protests, he finds that the presence of an anti-war protest *positively* impacted the public's perceptions of the president's handling of the war and his popularity for up to three months. These results are troubling for Berkowitz, who concludes his article by asking, "What will we do if we face up to the possibility that nothing works, or that nothing works well, that our society is too atomized, too well-insulated for any social movement or any scientifically imposed principle to turn it around?" (Berkowitz 1973, p. 13). He then begs for additional research to resist the acceptance of null results and to isolate when and how social movements can persuade public opinion.

For the most part, Berkowitz's plea for further research on protests and public opinion went unanswered. Four decades later, recent research highlights the role that protests can play in shaping public opinion. Much of this scholarship capitalizes on a wave of immigrants' rights protests that overlapped with the data collection of the Latino National Survey in the United States. In the wake of this data collection coincidence, numerous scholars have sought to explain how those protests may have influenced political attitudes of Latinos in America. This work demonstrates that spatial proximity to these protests shaped Latino Americans' feelings of empowerment and alienation (Wallace et al. 2014), issue saliency (Carey et al. 2014), group identity (Silber Mohamed 2013), and policy preferences (Branton et al. 2015). Despite drawing from the same data and exploiting the same historical case, this scholarship is nevertheless highly fragmented in terms of theory and findings. For example, Wallace et al. (2014) find that while some local protests can increase feelings of empowerment, others lead to alienation. More contradictions exist at the individual level, where the same protest can make individuals increase the salience of Latino-related issues (Carey et al. 2014) while at the same time decreasing the salience of their Latino identity vis-à-vis their American identity (Silber Mohamed 2013). For Latino-related policy preferences, protests

can increase support for some policies such as amnesty and decrease support for guest-worker programs, and the reason for this preference divergence is not clear (Branton et al. 2015).

Evidence beyond the immigration-based protests leads to similarly ambiguous findings. Andrews et al. (2015) merge protest data with a representative survey conducted in 1961 to explain why a small subset of white Southerners supported integration. They argue that news about sit-ins should influence support for civil rights in counties with protest and, by extension, spatially contiguous counties. The authors find that living in a county in which protests took place helped to garner sympathy for the movement, but the effect does not hold for contiguous counties. The arbitrariness by which county borders matter casts some uncertainty around the authors' expectation that proximity to the sit-ins would be sufficient to increase support. Thus, the most basic finding remains the same as the Latino-American studies: protests have a strong capacity to shape the public's perceptions and preferences. However, the effects are somewhat inconsistent and unpredictable.

In summary, literature on the engaging effects of protests seems relatively straight-forward for protest participants: protests mobilize. Furthermore, mechanisms such as social capital and participatory contagion indicate that the engaging effects of protests should extend to the public audience. However, extending protest effects from participants to the public presents significant inconsistencies. While practically all of the literature agrees that protests have some capacity to influence the public audience, those effects vary from study to study and by model specification.

The ambiguity and inconsistency of these findings might be explained – at least in part – by methodological shortfalls of the designs traditionally used to empirically examine the public consequences of protest. From Berkowitz in the 1970s to the Latino public opinion research of

2014, the methodological crux of all these designs depends on protest event analysis and data collection through news reports. However, the assumption that protest event data creates a comprehensive or representative sample of all protests has been taken to task on multiple occasions (Franzosi 1987; Rucht and Neidhardt 1999; Earl et al. 2004). Critics argue that most protest event data suffer from selection bias. News agencies cannot report on all protest events, and the events that are ultimately reported are biased in terms of norms and editorial concerns. Indeed, comparisons between news reports and objective sources suggest that the media covers far less than half of all protest events (Barranco and Wisler 1999; Oliver and Maney 2000; Titerenko et al. 2001). Scholars have found a number of idiosyncratic factors that could influence the probability of an event being reported, such as the proximity of the event to the news agency (McCarthy et al. 1999; Mueller 1997), the particular issue involved and its relevance to the other stories being covered (McCarthy et al. 1999; Oliver and Maney 2000), the size of the event (Hug and Wisler 1998; Oliver and Myers 1999), the intensity of the event (Mueller 1997), the level of violence (Barranco and Wisler 1999), and even the use of sound equipment (Oliver and Maney 2000). Given these biases in event reporting, it is challenging for protest scholars to draw reliable and generalizable comparisons between reported protest events.

To be clear, even the descriptions of reported protests cannot to be taken for granted as factual data; reports are highly vulnerable to description bias and media framing. Protest properties that are found in “hard news,” such as the protest group, the date, and the number of protesters, often have some variables omitted from news reports. The individual journalist or news organization bases properties from “soft news,” such as complex explanations of the grievances and personal impressions, on subjective perceptions (McCarthy et al. 1999; Hochstetler 2006). Moreover, some research suggests that journalists are more likely to describe a protest as more

conflictive or deviant than it is in reality (Baylor 1996), and more cynical scholars maintain that journalists deliberately paint protests in a negative light (Gitlin 1977, 1980; McLeod and Hertog 1992).

When using these highly subjective data, it is challenging to differentiate the effect of the protest from the confounding effects of the journalist's report. Even small, stylistic changes in a protests' media coverage can have a significant impact on the public's response to protest. Experimental research indicates that minor changes in media frame can have major effects on the public's perception of the protest. McLeod (1995) and McLeod and Detenber (1999) report the results of a framing experiment in which they present multiple news reports of the same protest to an audience of undergraduate students. They find that the frame of the coverage significantly shapes the viewers' level of support for the protesters, criticism of the police response, and perceived effectiveness of the protest. More specifically, frames that defend the status quo tend to result in higher criticism of protests, lower levels of support for and identification with the protesters, and lower perceived effectiveness and newsworthiness of the event (McLeod and Detenber 1999). Frames that emphasize the deviance of the protesters can decrease the viewers' self-identification with the protest and increase criticisms of the protesters' tactics (McLeod 1995). Similarly, small, aesthetic changes in the news articles can drive perceptions. An experiment on visualization cues found that protest stories with visual images of conflict can substantially decrease perceived effectiveness of the protest and increase criticism of the protest (Arpan et al. 2006). Ultimately, very small differences in reporting can result in large changes in public perceptions.

## **2.2 PROTEST CHARACTERISTICS AND HETEROGENEOUS EFFECTS**

These methodological challenges aside, analyses that take seriously the distinctions between protests have been able to carefully test specific hypotheses about the causes of collective action and often find that the differences between protest events matter a great deal. One of the more common distinctions concerns the difference between demonstrations and strikes, which appear to be very different animals (Arce and Mangonnet 2012). Thus, by isolating strikes from other types of protest, many papers draw intriguing, specific conclusions about the causes of labor unrest (Murillo and Roncini 2004; Robertson and Teitelbaum 2011). Similarly, a great deal of scholarship is focused on the differences between non-violent protest and violent forms of protest (Bergesen and Herman 1998; Stephan and Chenoweth 2008). It is increasingly common to isolate more violent events because they are more salient (Gillion 2012) and more likely to be reported in the news (Pierskalla and Hollenbach 2013). Some work goes one-step further by grouping protests based on the message or content of the protesters' grievances. For example, was the protest based on liberal grievances (Kelly, Petrow, and Soule 2010), or was it explicitly about food shortages (Bellemare 2011)? Given the enormous variety of forms that protests can take, it is puzzling that so little of the research on public consequences distinguishes between events.

This dissertation aims to disentangle protest events by distinct characteristics in order to paint a more coherent picture of the effects. I will focus on two specific characteristics of protests - the level of violence and size – because scholars have found that both of these characteristics can change outcomes. These two characteristics are somewhat vulnerable to framing effects because their coverage and reporting might vary a great deal between journalistic accounts, but they are hardly as subjective and interpretive as protest frames and messages. This middle-ground leaves room for a wide variety of responses and consequences.

Although no one has tested the effects of these characteristics on public engagement, violence and size have yielded conflicting results in other studies on protest consequences. Protests vary a great deal in their use of violence. Many groups use violence and aggressive techniques in order to show commitment or attract media attention, and some statistical analysis suggests that groups that utilize violence may be more successful in achieving their goals than peaceful groups (Gamson 1975). Scholars suspicious of Gamson's data coding and analysis are more concerned with the potentially *negative* consequences of violence (Cress and Snow 2000; McAdam and Su 2002). Violence is expected to distract audiences from the main purpose of the protest, accumulate too many enemies, and ultimately create a negative media environment.

The size of the protest can also divide public responses. Larger protests are certainly more obstructive, harder to maintain, and are more likely to contain vandals and radicals intent on destroying property or scuffling with the police. In their quantitative analysis of protests and Latino public opinion, Wallace et al. (2014) found contrasting effects among small and large protests. To explain these results, they conducted 120 interviews with activists on the differences between different marches, and they ultimately conclude that larger protests are vulnerable to internal disputes and competing messages that confuse and frustrate local bystanders. Small protests, on the other hand, are much better able to coordinate their frames and deliver clear, optimistic messages.

## **2.3 THE PARADOX OF CONFRONTATION: EXPOSURE AND ENGAGEMENT**

This dissertation takes the argument of heterogeneity a step further than traditional research. Just in the way that not all protest coverage is the same, and not all protests are the same,

I maintain that there is significant heterogeneity among the protest audience as well. Quite different from protest participants, the public audience varies enormously in its exposure to the protest, and I will argue that this heterogeneity can result in unique effects.

Underpinning extant research lies the implicit assumption that protesters and their audiences are directly comparable. However, in addition to descriptive differences between participants and non-participants, there are also inherent characteristics of the audience that fundamentally change the lens of analysis. First, much of the potential audience is not an audience at all. As non-participants of the protest, much of the general public may be unaware of - or deliberately *avoid* - local protests. The individuals who avoid the protest and those who are oblivious to it may be observationally equivalent, but they represent distinct populations who could respond to protests in distinct ways if exposed.

Second, even among the audience that is aware of the protest, there is a great deal of heterogeneity in how they experience the event. Representing a hugely diverse subset of the general public, the only common denominator among the protest audience is exposure to the same protest. But even that condition is highly varied. While protesters tend to share similar experiences of a protest, there is no fixed or unified signal by which the entire audience perceives the protest or receives information. Some of the audience may have encountered the protest through the media, others through word-of-mouth, and others by physical confrontation.

The notion that protest audiences differ by the form of exposure is non-trivial. It is well-documented in the literature that the *medium* by which individuals are exposed to something may be as important as the thing itself. A classic example is public's response to crime. Scholars have identified a steady increase in the public's fear of crime, despite the fact that crime rates have



remained relatively constant. It is often argued that the underlying root of fear is the shift in media portrayals of crime, rather than crime itself (Gordon and Heath 1991; Jaehnig et al. 1981; Chiricos et al. 1997; Lowrey et al. 2003). Studies that attempt to compare the effects of real-life crime and media portrayals of crime consistently find divergent effects. For example, in models that include indicators for local crime rates and news consumption, Weitzer and Kubrin (2004) find that national news consumption tends to result in feelings of safety while local news consumption and personal experiences with crime had the opposite effect. Custers and van den Bulck (2011) find that media-based crime exposure leads individuals to be more fearful of the world in general, but real-life experiences with crime increase the respondent's fear of their local area. Ultimately, because an individual's perception of crime varies so much between personal experience and the media, it is unsurprising that different forms of exposure lead to distinct outcomes.

I argue that reactions to protests also vary as a function of exposure. Specifically, I argue that personal exposure to protest events differs from exposure through the media. To date, scholars have made few efforts to disentangle real protest events from media reports. As a notable exception, McPhail and Schweingruber (1999) highlight the gap between real protest events and news reports of protests. They create a methodology, described in detail in *The Collective Action Observation Primer* (McPhail and Schweingruber 1995), that sends trained observers to record what actually happens during various protest events and then compares their notes with subsequent media coverage. The principal finding from their recorded observations is that collective action only very seldom occurs unanimously or uniformly. The protests they attended looked more like loosely connected congregations of small groups than like homogenous demand-making bodies. While these complexities might be all-too apparent to an onlooker, they are generally absent from protest accounts in the media. The authors found that media reports of the same events largely

failed to convey any of this complexity, focusing instead on the small fraction of behaviors that were most organized and collective. Although the protest event is the same and the message is the same, the audience of the news report will come away with a very different experience than that of the audience in the street.

With this in mind, how might the audience's reaction to a real protest differ from that of a protest reported in the media? In the only chapter to date on protest bystanders, Gamson offers a possible answer. He supposes it unlikely that the public will make an effort to understand and engage in the unruly and disruptive protest. "For [bystanders of the protest]," he intimates that "the issues being debated by the contestants in the arena are unimportant relative to the collateral damage and inconvenience they produce" (2004: p. 244). This suggestion challenges the vast majority of social movement literature, which is highly aware of the protesters' need to occupy and interrupt public life in order to capture an audience (Benford and Hunt 1992; McAdam 1996; McCarthy and McPhail 2006), but widely assumes that the public does not mind the interruption. It is worth considering the possibility that the public begrudges its role as a captive audience and focuses more on the inconvenience of the event than the message.

Although this hypothesis has never been empirically tested, pieces of evidence appear between-the-lines of journalists' protest descriptions. The small minority of protest reports that interview protest bystanders and onlookers tend to describe them as confused, annoyed, frustrated, and unable to see past protest tactics to focus on any specific political message. For example, after seeing an Occupy Wall Street activist attempt to scale a statue, an interviewed bystander says, "...he's trying to make a point, but I don't know what that point is" (Newcomb 2011). The same year in Cairo, Egypt, upon seeing that the military forcefully removed protesters from Tahir Square, a bystander was asked about his thoughts. He said, "Finally! The protest was fine, but we

also want space to breathe, we want to see the traffic flow” (Afify and Audi 2011).<sup>3</sup> Reports from a gay-rights march in Moscow, Russia describe passerbys who attempt to protect protesters from police aggression, and then abandon the protesters upon learning what the march was actually about (Mackey and Roth 2013). During the Umbrella Revolution, bystanders in Hong Kong reportedly jeered and yelled at activists because they were “angry about the disruption caused by the inconvenience” (Branigan 2014). A more analytical piece in Mexico’s political journal, *Proceso*, describes the average bystander’s perception of a protest in Mexico City, a city with a constant stream of protest activity:

*The scene repeats itself regularly. The news shows protesters occupying a major road, and they interview some of the desperate drivers approaching the camera: “I’ve been in traffic for an hour,” “I’m exhausted with all these lazy guys.” The reporter reinforces the editorial position with a barrage of insults against the protesters. Marches turn into primitive, annoying, useless practices (Proal 2015).*

Although anecdotal, these reactions are indicative of an important, though mostly unspoken, public reaction to protest. Certainly, they do not sound like reactions of bystanders who desperately crave to join the picket-line or research the protesters’ claims. On the contrary, when they are confronted with the protests’ disruptive or confusing tactics, these bystander audiences fail to notice or evaluate the protest message at all. Rather than observing a broad political struggle, they appear only see a personal inconvenience, a traffic jam, or a scattered crowd.

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<sup>3</sup> The reporters also claimed that, “Other bystanders were angry over the forced eviction,” but the allegedly supportive bystanders who were interviewed consisted of one man who participated in the sit-in himself and another man who was a spokesman for the anti-Mubarak party (Afify and Audi 2011).

In this context, it seems unlikely that an audience would respond to real protests in the same way that they would respond to protest reports. The media can separate the message of the protest from the experience of the event. The audience is pointed directly to the protesters' goals and targets without experiencing the crowd and the distractions. Meanwhile, for those who are exposed to the protest in the streets, delivery of the protest message depends on the protest experience, which often does not reduce to the well-defined objectives and clear narratives identified in news reports.

Consequently, I argue that the audience effects of protests are contingent on the sources of exposure. All else equal, individuals who do not intentionally attend the protest but who experience it in the streets anyway will be less likely to engage with the issues or feel inspired to take action. These individuals may not see past the distracting tactics and confrontational ambience to engage in the issues. Meanwhile, the individuals who encounter the protest outside of the confrontational conditions in the streets are more likely to respond as protesters would hope – by engaging with the issue, discussing it, and possibly taking political action. In absence of the protest's disruption, the audience is exposed directly to a political issue that, as evidenced by the existence of a protest, has attracted some controversy and generated some citizen mobilization. For social capital theorists and scholars of participatory diffusion, such an event appears to be an ideal stimulus for subsequent engagement.

## **2.4 CAUSAL MECHANISMS**

This dissertation aims to dig deeper into the relationship between protests and engagement. More than simply recognizing that there is a causal relationship, I hope to explain the psychological

mechanism by which those effects occur. To date, there has been no systematic study on the causal mechanism between protests and bystander behavior, but I will consider three possible psychological mechanisms. I will refer to these mechanisms as *mediators* because they are expected to mediate the causal chain between the treatment and the outcome. That is, protests are theorized to have a direct effect on political engagement and, in addition to this direct effect, protests are expected to influence engagement indirectly through a set of psychological mediators.

There is no research that directly addresses the mediation of protest effects among the public, but there is considerable scholarship on protests' psychological effects on participants. Using this work as a foundation, I use two criteria to identify mediators that might connect protests to public engagement: 1) there must be reason to believe that protests could trigger this mechanism among the public (not just participants), and 2) this mechanism must have some theoretical and empirically established link to political engagement. Using these two criteria, I have identified emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy as mechanisms that transmit the effects of protests. Of course, it is possible that other mediators might exist, and further research is necessary to identify what they might be and how strongly they mediate the indirect effects of protests.<sup>4</sup>

### **2.4.1 Emotions**

Emotions, broadly defined, are underlying responses to relevant stimuli (Damasio 2000). Within this broad definition, there is a great deal of variation (see Jasper 2006 for a typology). Some emotions, such as lust and fatigue, are urges. They consist of strong bodily impulses that are based on physical needs (Elster 1999). Moods, such as happiness and sadness, are very different.

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<sup>4</sup> My survey also included two additional mediators, group identification and issue salience. These mediators resulted in overwhelmingly inconsistent or insignificant findings and were removed from the dissertation.

They are the longest-lasting emotions and may not clearly result from any particular stimulus (Damasio 2003). Reflex emotions, such as anger, joy, and fear, represent immediate reactions to the environment. They tend to appear and dissipate quickly, and they are easily typically accompanied by physical reactions and facial expressions (Ekman, Frisen, and Ellsworth 1972). For the purposes of this dissertation, I will exclusively refer to reflex emotions because I am interested in the immediate and clear responses to the stimulus of protest activity.

Recently, social movement scholars have paid special attention to the role of emotions in protest activity, and they have found that emotions play a role in nearly all aspects of movement dynamics (Flam and King 2005; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001; Jasper 1998, 2011). A commonly highlighted finding relates to the strategic use of emotional appeals and their success in garnering support and participation on behalf of social movements (Snow and Benford 1992; Gould 2009; Williamson 2011). Emotional triggers are fundamental to mobilization; individuals tend to join a movement when they feel strongly for the protest group or the cause. Because these emotional triggers are such powerful mobilizers, protest organizers deliberately elicit anger, fear, solidarity, and joy in order to pluck “the responsive chord” and entice individuals to join their movement (Schwartz 1973; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001). Similar to the way that politicians exploit emotional appeals in their campaigns, grassroots organizers use images, sounds, and phrases in their protests in order to tap into bystanders’ experiences and manipulate their emotional reactions (Brader 2006).

Most research draws a distinction between positive and negative emotions. Movements often trigger positive emotions such as enthusiasm, hope, and pride in order to attract individuals to the group and then subsequently bond the group members together and sustain collective action (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001). But the benefits of positive emotions are not limited to

protest participants. Scholars from a diverse set of disciplines have long argued that collective events such as protests give off palpable, positive energy and, ultimately, generate enthusiasm among bystanders (Collins 1975; Marwell and Oliver 1993; Durkheim 1995 [1912]). What exactly is this group-generated enthusiasm? Collins draws an analogy to a bustling restaurant that remains busy because everyone understands it to be “where the action is” (2001; 27). Jasper describes it as a “constant stream of emotions” that flows from collective action. He continues to say that, “the more emotional energy and excitement [protests] generate... the more likely participants are to continue” (2011; 296). In short, protests are exciting events, and the event itself is likely to encourage widespread enthusiasm.

Conversely, scholars find that social movements deliberately target negative emotions such as anger and frustration so that individuals collectively direct their negativity towards a target (Gamson 1992; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001) and demand a response (Jasper 2011). It is important that movements elicit these emotions because they trigger a sense of vulnerability that begets the need to take action (Kemper 2001). Moreover, although this premise is not founded on social movement literature, it is certainly reasonable to suppose that uninvolved bystanders might interpret the “energy” emanating from a protest as highly confrontational and intimidating. As a result, the group-generated enthusiasm and excitement from protests could easily translate into group-generated anxiety and nervousness.

Psychological research suggests that positive emotions in particular are likely to induce long-term mobilizing effects. Fredrickson’s Broaden-Hypothesis argues that positive emotions - such as joy, interest, love, and solidarity - are thought to *broaden* an individual’s focus (Fredrickson 1998, 2001). These emotions expand the individual’s attention to a more global scope, producing explorative and participatory behavior (Bless et al. 1996; Dreisbach and Goschke

2004). The broaden hypothesis has been tested through a series of psychological tests. For example, Wadlinger and Isaacowitz (2006) tracked participants' eye movements to test their search patterns after emotional stimuli and found that positive emotions literally expand the range of focus in an individual's eye movement. Similarly, Fredrickson and Branigan (2005) conclude that individuals feel more willing to participate in a greater quantity and variety of activities when they experience positive emotions than individuals in the control group or those who are left to feel negative emotions.

Such emotions have been shown to produce powerful effects on political attitudes and behavior. While there are a few theories on the political consequences of emotion (Lodge and Taber 2005), the one that has produced the most literature and empirical evidence is Affective Intelligence Theory (Marcus and Mackuen 1993, Marcus 2002). According to AIT, individuals modify their behavior as a response to their emotions, and the behavioral response is determined by the type of emotion experienced. AIT has been tested through panel data analysis (Marcus et al. 2011) and through experimentation (Brader 2011), and it has withstood very sharp criticism (Ladd and Lenz 2008; 2010). Despite the methodological challenges associated with testing behavioral consequences of emotions, there is powerful evidence to support the hypotheses that emotions produce mobilizing responses and that the particular response is contingent on the type of emotion.

According to Affective Intelligence Theory, positive emotions, excitement and enthusiasm, are governed by the disposition system, but this system is typically referred to more succinctly as "enthusiasm" (Ladd and Lenz 2008). AIT argues that enthusiasm reflects and reinforces an individual's political evaluations (Brader 2005). The opposite of the disposition system is the surveillance system. According to AIT, the surveillance system governs negative



emotions such as anxiety, stress and fear. The literature has termed this system “anxiety.” According to the pivotal work by Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen (2011), anxiety triggers very different responses from those generated by enthusiasm, and ultimately it can lead to a change in previously held political evaluations. Anxiety is an emotion that appeals to an individual’s cognitive dimension, and it “recruits reason and disables habit” (Marcus 2002, p. 116). An individual experiencing anxiety will question his prior evaluations and attitudes, and he will seek out information. His prior beliefs will be shaken, and he will find himself in a position of critical reflection (Brader 2005). This research provides substantial evidence that individuals who experience positive emotions will become affectively mobilized, and individuals who experience negative emotions will mobilize in much more specific ways by seeking additional information.

*Mechanism H1:* Positive emotions, such as pride and enthusiasm, will lead to engagement on a wide range of indicators.

*Mechanism H2:* Negative emotions, such as anxiety, will lead to engagement on much more specific indicators related to information-seeking.

## **2.4.2 Conflict Aversion**

The emotional mechanism assumes that non-participants pay some minimal attention to the protest and organizing group. Individuals must be at least minimally aware of the event to know it is taking place and experience an emotional response. However, it is possible that individuals will tune-out even before that mechanism can take place. In this section, I argue that non-participants view and respond to protests much in the same way as they respond to political debate. That is, protest is conceptualized as a noisy, traffic-jamming method of presenting a side of a political argument. In contrast with the normative theories of political deliberation (Ely 1980;

Barber 1984; Young 2000), most empirical evidence finds that conflictive political discussions result in alienation and disengagement. Thus, if protest may be interpreted through this lens of political conflict, I will argue that they should ultimately lead to disengagement.

Psychologists have long-noted a tendency of individuals to avoid conflict, and there are a number of explanations for why this may be the case. On the one hand, it may be the case the disagreement creates a negative tension for the individual, who will subsequently try to reduce the tension (Petty and Cacioppo 1981). On the other hand, other research suggests that it is not necessarily a negative perception of disagreement, but a positive perception of agreement that limits individuals' degree of conflict. By self-selection, individuals make friends and associate with others who share similar values and beliefs, making conflict less common (Byrne 1971; Berscheid 1985). Meanwhile, other researchers find more evidence for social accountability, the theory that individuals inherently desire social harmony and will do what is necessary to keep the peace (Mansbridge 1980; Green, Visser, and Tetlock. 2000; Mutz 2006).

Whatever the cause of conflict avoidance, psychologists are less conflicted over its consequences. Scholars find that the clear consequence of conflict-avoidance is equivocation, or hesitance in forming and voicing opinions (Bavelas 1983, 1985, 1998; Bavelas et al. 1990a, 1990b; Bello 1999). Through experiments, these scholars have found that individuals prefer to say nothing, or say something very vague and non-committal, rather than confront themselves with the consequences of direct replies.

Significant research suggests that individuals' psychological aversion to conflict is relevant to their political behavior. Indeed, evidence of the political consequences of conflict aversion first appeared as early as 1944 with the publication of *The People's Choice* (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and

Gaudet 1944). The authors found that conflicting messages from cross-cutting cleavages make political decision-making more difficult. More recently, substantial evidence from surveys and focus groups indicates that most people have a deep aversion to the conflictual nature of politics. With increased participation and deliberation comes an increased awareness of diverse opinions and unsettling disagreement (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001, 2002). Hibbing and Theiss-Morse conclude that, “participation in politics is low because people do not like politics even in the best of circumstances; in other words, they simply do not like the process of openly arriving at a decision in the face of diverse opinions” (2002: p. 3).

Political network research based in the United States suggests that individuals shy away from political conflict. According to the literature on cross-cutting discourse and political disagreement, the desire to avoid political conflict is fundamental in an individual’s political behavior. At the individual level, cross-cutting political discourse demobilizes individuals because it leaves them uncertain about what to believe, and an individual who dislikes conflict is likely to distance him/herself from politics when placed in such uncertainty (Mutz 2002). At the contextual level, individuals who live in conflict-ridden neighborhoods (in terms of political disagreement) withdraw from politics in the same way as individuals who directly speak with individuals who disagree with them (McClurg 2006). Thus, it is possible that nearby protests serve as a context, similar to a workplace environment, in which political conflict is accentuated and difficult to avoid (Mutz and Mondak 2006).

Furthermore, there is reason to believe that these findings pertain to Latin America just as much as they do to the United States. Individuals who live in a context of political conflict tend to respond to this conflict negatively. Longitudinal data on Brazilian social networks indicate that the majority of respondents who reported discussing politics tend to limit the degree of

disagreement within their network of political discussants (Smith 2011; Baker, Ames, and Renno 2006). Over four waves, only 27-32% of Brazilian respondents admit to discussing politics with a discussant with whom he/she disagrees (Smith 2011). Even individuals who participate actively in local politics tend to avoid directly ‘political discussions,’ differentiating between community participation for concrete goals and contentious, intense discussions about the state of the government (Baiocchi 2005). Cross-national psychological tests demonstrate that Ecuadorians are even more likely than Euro-Americans to accept lies for the sake of conflict avoidance (Mealy, Stephan, and Urritia 2007).

While the potentially negative externalities of protest activity have never been examined explicitly in sociology or political science, scholars have hinted that protests, and the political conflict they create, may result in a feeling of anxiety for the bystanders and cause them to demobilize where the protester may mobilize. In their classic text on social movements, Turner and Killian claim that, “the bystander public [around social movements] defines the primary issue as restoration of order and elimination of danger and inconvenience by bringing *any* end to the conflict” (1987: p. 216-217). This suggests that protests may exemplify for bystanders precisely the kind of political conflict that they avoid in congressional debates and public deliberation.

*Mechanism H5:* Protests, especially highly conflictive protests, will trigger conflict aversion.

*Mechanism H6:* Conflict aversion will lead to disengagement.

### **2.4.3. Political Efficacy**

The final mechanism I will discuss is political efficacy, or an individual's belief that they can understand (internal efficacy) and influence (external efficacy) political decisions and outcomes. The process by which protests might influence political efficacy is based on the rational choice models of protest. These models are fundamentally based on the theory that political action results from individual calculations of the costs of participation, the benefits of a successful action, and the probability of success.

A commonly critiqued feature of the rational choice model of protest is the assumption that individuals calculate their costs and benefits homogenously and independently of one another. Threshold models of riots and collective action relax this assumption by building preference interdependence into the model (Schelling 1971, 1978; Granovetter 1978). They argue that most non-radical bystanders will decide to participate in a riot when the riot has already attracted a high number of participants, but they are much less likely to participate when the riot is small. Combined with the lower expected costs of repression, a high number of participants indicates greater efficacy of the protest and greater probability of achieving the benefits of successful mobilization. That is, a protest that is sufficiently large and reaches a "critical mass" can persuade bystanders that they can make a difference (Oberschall 1994).

The importance of political efficacy for rational collective action is brought to the forefront in expectancy-value models. In psychology, expectancy-value models interpret individual behavior as a function of the perceived expectation of achieving certain outcomes (Rotter 1972; Mitchell 1974). In rational choice theory, the expected benefit of a protest is only valuable if the expected probability of achieving that outcome – and consequently, the product of the two items -

is not zero (Klandermans 1984; Muller and Opp 1986; Finkel, Muller and Opp 1989). Political efficacy is partially a result of an individual's personal resources or perceived influence, but an important component of perceived efficacy is directly attributed to the protest itself (Finkel, Muller and Opp 1989). Non-participants receive specific cues from protest events, and these cues shape the individual's perceived efficacy of participation. Such cues may include past success of the protest group (Muller 1972, 1979) or, as the threshold models suggest, the number of participants already involved in the protest (Granovetter 1978; Oliver, Marwell and Teixeira 1985; Oberschall 1989).

The efficacy-based models described in this section aim to explain why individuals would participate in a protest and why an individual's perception of the protest may determine his decision to participate. However, as Granovetter (1978, p. 1421) acknowledges, the perceived efficacy of collective action may drive other forms of social behavior as well. Indeed, the mechanism does not dictate that protest must be the final outcome, but rather that the individual contributes to the collective effort to instigate change. Upon observing that there is an opportunity to change the status quo on a particular issue, the individual may decide not to protest but to contact politicians directly, sign petitions, or make his statement through voting. Theoretically, the mechanism would be the same: a sizeable or seemingly effective protest allows the individual to see change as possible, and the individual becomes more likely to contribute to the collective demand for change.

There is no shortage of literature to demonstrate that perceived efficacy is an important psychological antecedent of political engagement, particularly voter turnout (Verba and Nie 1972; Finkel 1985; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). There is also evidence to suggest that efficacy operates as a mediating variable linking political context to electoral participation (Karp and

Banducci 2008). The relationship with protest participation is more ambiguous. Gamson (1968) developed an intuitive theory that protest results from the interaction between high efficacy and low trust, but this theory has not held up to empirical scrutiny. Sigelman and Feldman (1983) found that the interaction was a significant but weak predictor of protest participation, and Seligson (1980) found that efficacy has stronger effects for institutionalized participation than for protest mobilization. More recently, Schussman and Soule (2005) did not find significant effects of efficacy on protest for any of their fully controlled models.

*Mechanism H7:* Political efficacy will lead to increased engagement, especially for non-protest indicators.

*Mechanism H8:* Larger protests are more likely to trigger increases in political efficacy than smaller protests.

## **2.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

To summarize, I have developed a theory to explain why protests might increase political engagement among the general public. It is well-established that protest participation can further engagement among activists, but it is not obvious that these results pertain to non-participants as well. There is reason to believe that protests would stimulate engagement among the public through the same mechanisms by which other forms of political participation spread (i.e., social capital and diffusion from casual observation). Unfortunately, whenever the empirical analyses of protests extend to the general public, results can be ambiguous and inconsistent. I argue that this is, in part, a function of the methodological challenges of protest event data. In addition, I argue that extant literature dismisses the heterogeneity of protests and of protest exposure.

I pay especially close attention to the heterogeneity of protest exposure. The notion that individuals react differently to protests encountered in the media than to protests encountered in real life has never played a role in social movement literature. In order to make this argument, I include evidence from other fields, particularly criminology, and from journalistic accounts. I argue that individuals who are exposed to protests by the media receive an easy-to-follow cue about the importance of specific issues and the norms of engagement among their peers. These types of cues are precisely the stimuli necessary for participatory diffusion to take place. Meanwhile, individuals who are exposed to protests in real life are inconvenienced by the disruption and confusion of the protest event. Unlike protesters who gain “selective incentives” from this event, I argue that non-participants will prefer to avoid the confrontation and will become less interested in political action.

I then turn my attention towards the causal mechanisms that theoretically link protests to audience engagement. I identify three possible mediators – emotions, conflict aversion and political efficacy. Scholars have found that 1) protests can induce any of these variables among protest participants, and 2) there is reason to believe that the effects can extend to the wider protest audience. Although the fieldwork for this dissertation also included group identification and issue salience as potential mechanisms, I found that the three mediators discussed here were most the theoretically compelling and empirically viable.



### 3.0 METHODOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION: A TWO-PRONGED EXPERIMENT

The aim of this dissertation is to measure the causal effect of protests on the general public. This goal comes with three basic challenges: 1) to measure *the causal effect*, 2) to do so for *a wide set of protests*, and 3) to evaluate these effects on *the general public*. Recent literature attempts to meet these challenges by geographically merging media-reported protest data with representative surveys. I will argue that this strategy does not sufficiently identify the causal effect of protests, and I have designed a two-pronged experiment to remedy these deficiencies. The design randomly assigns individual exposure to protests in Mexico City – operationalized as vignette and field treatments of protests – and compares individual engagement between treated and control respondents. In this chapter, I will explain why traditional methodologies have proved insufficient for these research questions, outline my experimental design, describe the questionnaire, and provide descriptive statistics on the full sample.

The literature that examines public externalities of protest is still very young. As I discussed in Section 2.1, it is mainly limited to one article about southerner's attitudes in response to the civil rights movement (Andrews et al. 2015) and a handful of articles on Latinos' responses to the immigration protests of 2006 (Silber Mohamed 2013; Carey, Branton and Martinez-Ebers 2014; Wallace, Zepeda-Millán and Jones Correa 2014; Branton et al. 2015). Although this nascent work is fairly diverse in terms of research questions and findings, they all share one methodological approach: the merging of contextual protest data into large, scientifically sampled surveys. In particular, the Latino-American research makes use of the convenient implementation of the

Latino National Survey, a panel survey of Latino Americans in the spring of 2006. The two waves of the panel were coincidentally interrupted by a massive wave of protests contesting the passage of H.R. 4437 (Border Protection and Anti-terrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005). These individual level data are combined with geo-coded data on immigration-based protests as they are reported in the media. These protests are argued to represent a “treatment” in a quasi-experimental setting, where differences are taken between respondents who live in proximity to protests and those who live distant from protests, and between pre- and post- treatment responses. The treatment is framed in a couple of different ways. One treatment is considered to be spatial proximity, which is conceptualized as one or more anti-H.R. 4437 protests within 100 miles of the respondent’s home address. Another treatment relies on the timing of the protest, which occurred *before* data collection in the second wave for some cities and *after* data collection in others. Similarly, the civil rights article merges data on media-reported sit-ins with individual-level data from the Matthews and Prothro (1966) survey from the 1960s.

This approach is a creative and innovative way to study the effects of protest on public opinion, but it does come with its own weaknesses. First, it is important to note that individual exposure to the protest is not verified. Exposure to protest is operationalized as living with a specifically-assigned radius of a reported protest. In a traditional experiment, one might say that only the *Intent-to-Treat* (the ITT) - rather than the actual treatment – can be verified. In a fully experimental setting, analysis of the ITT would be justified by random assignment, but in a quasi-experimental setting such as this, the assumption of random assignment does not hold. Indeed, the cities in which protests take place are almost certainly different from those without protests, and those individuals who are exposed to the protest are almost certainly different from those who are

not exposed. In this case, the ITT – or assignment to treatment – is highly biased by confounding variables at the individual-level and the higher geographic level.

In a similar vein, the inability to verify exposure leaves the design vulnerable to two-sided noncompliance. Many respondents who live in protest-cities will not have been exposed to the protest at all. Perhaps they avoid local news and do not care for politics. Similarly, it is likely that respondents who do not live in protest-cities will have been exposed to the protests from other cities through the media, perhaps because they care about political issues and pay close attention to recent news. Indeed, because highly motivated individuals are likely to treat themselves regardless of treatment assignment, and unmotivated individuals are similarly likely to avoid treatment, it is very difficult to estimate effects of a treatment group relative to a control group.

An additional shortcoming is the design's inability to distinguish between different types and degrees of exposure. The scholars who make use of this design have no idea whether or not, to what degree, and by what medium individuals may have been treated. For example, it is possible that some physically encountered the protest while others only heard about it on the news. Some respondents may have very indirectly heard about the protests through friends while others may have actively participated. Indeed, the heterogeneity of exposure may potentially determine its effects, so it is important to incorporate them into the research design.

Finally, it will be very difficult to use this predominant methodology to define a causal mechanism. What is it about protests that might generate a change in public opinion? Why? In order to capture these processes, the post-treatment survey instrument would need to be very specifically designed to sequentially measure theoretically relevant mediators followed by post-treatment dependent variables. This cannot be left to chance in a large, omnibus survey. Without

examining the mediating processes through a carefully designed survey, it is not clear through what mechanism change might occur. Furthermore, without a very wide variation of protest characteristics and – ideally – random assignment of those characteristics, it can be very difficult to see what kinds of protests are more likely to generate these effects.

### **3.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

In order to explain the effects of protests on public opinion while addressing the methodological challenges of previous research, I have designed a two-stage experiment. The first stage implements a population-based survey experiment in Mexico City. At this stage, I incorporate a fully-randomized vignette experiment that notifies respondents of a recent protest as they would hear about it in the news. For the second stage, respondents are folded into a placebo-controlled quasi-experiment in the field where real protests serve as the treatments. After being exposed to both treatments through the vignette and the field experiment, respondents respond to the mediator variables and the dependent variables.

The pluralistic nature of the design makes use of a case study and causal identification through experimentation. Experimental methods are unambiguously quantitative, but because of their reliance on specific cases, they bring a qualitative component to statistical analysis. Access to large protest datasets can encourage weak comparisons between cases, and their biased data (see Section 2.1) provide weak fodder for tight causal arguments. These weaknesses are due to the tradeoff between generalizability and precision that afflicts all purely quantitative and qualitative research. Meanwhile, experiments yield generalizable results through randomization without compromising the scholar's knowledge of the causal mechanism (Gerber and Green 2012). Thus, by making generalizable claims from a single case, experiments exploit the advantages of

qualitative and quantitative research. This is particularly true of field experiments, which often require the same level of attention to cases as qualitative case studies (Wood 2007).

I have chosen to conduct this project in Mexico City. As a result of the country's gradual process of democratization, Mexican citizens are still questioning and developing their patterns of participation (Almond and Verba 1963; McCann and Lawson 2003). Weak ideological and partisan attachments make Mexican voters particularly malleable and uncommitted (Lawson 2015; Nichter and Palmer-Rubin 2015). This type of flexible citizen is ideal for testing hypotheses on the increases and decreases in engagement. Furthermore, Mexico City contains a rich diversity and heavy level of protest activity. Indeed, the city government counted approximately 3,000 protests of all shapes and sizes in 2012 (Sheridan 2013). Unlike other countries, in which protests are dominated by a particular sector, Mexico's revolutionary past and relatively closed political system spark protests among nearly all sectors of society, including the agricultural sector, intellectuals, students, working poor, and the informal sector (Gutmann 2002; Hodges and Gandy 2002; Nevaer and Downs 2009). Significant events, such as the student massacre in 1968 and the 1985 earthquake in Mexico City, have justified protest activity as a crucial and respected means of political participation (Wood 2001; Almeida and Johnston 2006; Mattiace 2012). Finally, the immense size of the city also makes it ideal to examine the self-selection of protest exposure. Because of the structure of neighborhoods, or *colonias*, it is very possible for individuals to avoid protest-ridden areas if they please. As a result, although all respondents will be from the same city, the respondents' local contexts will vary a great deal in terms of past exposure to protest activity.

All treatments were based on real anti-violence protests in that took place in Mexico City in 2014-2015. In September 2014, these protests began in response to the disappearance and alleged mass murder of 43 leftist student teachers from the Ayotzinapa teachers' college in the

southern town, Iguala, in the state of Guerrero. Although there was no central social movement to organize events after the attack, a series of protests took the nation by storm as hundreds of thousands of participants mobilized to demand government accountability, improved democratic processes, justice for the victims' families, and a general break from the corrupt status quo in Mexican politics. These protests are ideal for this project for a number of reasons. Although there are countless protests to choose from in Mexico City, these protests were 1) expected to last for the duration of the study, 2) highly diverse, 3) non-partisan, and 4) substantively important.

The demands of the protests were so unattainable that there was no obvious end to the mobilizations. The primary rallying-cry of the protest is, "They brought [the 43 students] alive, we want them brought back alive" ("*Vivos los llevaron, vivos los queremos!*"), even though there is certainly no doubt that the students were killed shortly after being taken. If there is any unattainable goal, it is the reappearance of the 43 students. Furthermore, the protests' deeper goals of political accountability, the eradication of corruption, and a permanent solution to drug violence appear to be nearly as unattainable as the students' miraculous reappearances. The apparently insatiable demands of the protests were very important to this project because the movement did not depend on one specific issue with a finite horizon, and they could mobilize throughout the year of fieldwork.

Also, these protests were highly diverse and did not confine themselves to any specific repertoire. This is largely possible because no single group dominated in the organization of protests. In an early protest, a subgroup of a larger march burned a massive effigy of President Peña Nieto in the middle of the Zócalo and set fire to the door of the National Palace (Sim 2014). In other marches, participants held little candles to represent the demand for peace (Olivares 2014). There were sit-ins in front of the attorney general's office (*Excelsior* 2014), caravans that traveled

from all over the country to march on the nation's capital (*CNN Mexico* 2015), and highly creative artistic exhibitions (Marrón and Jiménez Jaramillo 2015). Some protests were very small with a few hundred participants, and others contained thousands of people. This diversity is critical for validity of the treatments. The treatments randomize characteristics of the protests in order to measure the relative impact of different protests, but few movements could contain such a wide set of protest events to make this randomization plausible.

Third, relative to most protest organizations in Mexico, these events appeared to be distinctly non-partisan. While some of the protests were organized by groups with clear partisan affiliations, there were so many groups mobilizing for the same cause that the partisan message was not immediately clear or consistent. Indeed, the demands of the group (accountability, justice, and an end to violence) are largely non-controversial, and not a single political party stood up against the protesters' claims. This is important because there would be few respondents who would oppose these protests on behalf of a deeply-set political affiliation, and theoretically, any respondent of any party would have the potential to be swayed to action as a result of protest exposure.

Finally, these protests are substantively important for Mexico and other countries that struggle with corruption and violence. Over the past decade, many thousands of Mexicans have died as a result of cartel violence, but the gruesome massacre of 43 student teachers hit a nerve that reverberated throughout the world (Kennis 2014). The impact of this event was so strong that protests continued for approximately a year after the original killing took place. Did these protests bring the general public to become political engaged and involved in these political issues? If protests can generate public engagement, these effects would be most important for an issue with such high stakes and wide-reaching significance as political/drug violence.

Of course, single case studies never allow for unlimited generalization, and this dissertation is no exception. There are some important scope conditions for the geographic and thematic cases selected. Regarding the geographic selection, Mexico City is an especially easy case to test in some respects. Citizen participation habits are quite flexible, and there is a constant stream of protest activity. Under these circumstances, it is imprudent to make generalizations about the effects of protests where participation is highly institutionalized and ritual or where protests occur infrequently. Also, the topic of the protests – political violence or organized crime – is not as controversial or contentious as many topics of protest. Again, it is plausible that the experiment would yield different outcomes for a different set of protests. For these reasons, I dedicate the sixth chapter of this dissertation to test the external validity of my findings in a new country, Brazil, where I cover a wide range of municipalities and protests.

### 3.2 BASIC OUTLINE OF THE EXPERIMENT

1. *Random Selection of Participants and Pre-Treatment Testing:* Through a Random-Digit-Dialing process, respondents were contacted to participate in a phone survey based on a pre-treatment questionnaire.<sup>5</sup> At the end of the survey, respondents were notified that they can receive compensation<sup>6</sup> for completing a follow-up interview at a later date. The questionnaire contained 1) initial measures of political engagement, 2) items for all covariates, 3) the vignette experiment, 4) demographic items, and 5) additional contact information (cell phone and email

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<sup>5</sup> All data were collected by the Mexico City-based survey firm, BGC Beltrán y Asocs.

<sup>6</sup> Respondents received a \$500 MX (approximately \$40 USD) gift card to *Liverpool*, an upscale department store.



address) which is used to provide further instructions on receiving compensation and follow-up.

2. *Random Assignment of Field Treatment:* Subjects were asked to personally collect their compensation at a specific time, date, and location.<sup>7</sup> Reminders of the times and locations of the follow-up interviews were sent to each respondent who provided contact details. The date and time block designated to each respondent determined whether or not they would encounter the protest when they returned the questionnaires. One half of the respondents were instructed to arrive for a follow-up interview within a two hour time frame during the first protest.<sup>8</sup> The remaining respondents were instructed to conduct the interview within a two-hour block of time the day of a second protest. Respondents who indicated that they would participate but never arrived were later contacted to arrive within a two-hour time block with no protest.

3. *Post-Treatment Testing:* A team from BGC Beltrán, Juárez y Asociados waited at the specifically designated locations to administer the follow-up questionnaires and distribute compensation. After respondents were exposed (or, in the case of the control group, not exposed) to the treatment, they were asked to respond again to an abridged version of the pre-treatment questionnaire.

The baseline survey was conducted over the telephone. A telephone survey mode is more cost-effective than a face-to-face survey and achieves a higher response rate with higher quality responses than self-administered surveys (Groves and Kahn 1979; Cannell et al. 1981). While self-

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<sup>7</sup> The location was specifically arranged beforehand in a safe place that is within close eye-shot of the protest.

<sup>8</sup> Respondents were not told that there would be a protest upon their arrival. All respondents in the treatment and control groups were told that they should leave plenty of time for traffic, given that there are often protests and events downtown.

administered, internet-based surveys are gaining traction in recent research, they do not present a viable option in Mexico City, where less than 40% of the population has access to the internet at home (Censo de Población y Vivienda). As is shown in Table 3.1, landline sampling is a highly effective method to cast a wide net for respondents in Mexico City.

**Table 3.1:**

<b>Telecommunications for Sampled <i>Colonias</i></b>			
	<b>Landline Phone (%)</b>	<b>Mobile Phone (%)</b>	<b>Internet (%)</b>
Azcapotzalco	76.10%	77.40%	41.10%
Gustavo Madero	69.90%	72.50%	33.20%
Benito Juárez	85.80%	88.40%	68.20%
Cuauhtemoc	74.20%	79.20%	44.30%
Miguel Hidalgo	79.60%	84.10%	55.20%
Venustiano Carranza	71.70%	75.50%	35.80%
Mexico City (Total)	71.90%	76.10%	39.20%
Mexico (National)	43.20%	65.10%	21.30%

Census data from Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010

Table 3.2 below reports the outcome rates for the phone survey. For each of the outcome types, I calculated the minimal rates that include ineligible households. The response rate is clearly quite low, but it is comparable with other landline phone samples (Pew Research Center 2012).

**Table 3.2:**

<b>Phone Survey</b>	
<b>AAPOR Response Rates</b>	
Response Rate I	6.40%
Cooperation Rate I	35%
Refusal Rate I	10.60%
Contact Rate I	18.20%

Respondents were sampled through a conditional random-digit dialing procedure using landline numbers. For every individual who answered the phone, the respondent needed to respond affirmatively to two basic conditions:<sup>9</sup> 1) Are you older than 18? 2) In which *colonia* do you live? The first condition was necessary to prevent children from being involved in the study. If the individual was *not* older than 18, the interviewer asked if an adult was present and willing to answer the phone. If the individual continued to say no, a new phone number was selected. The second condition restricts the sample to those living close to the city center. This condition was put in place to improve attendance for the second stage of the field experiment. That is, in a city as large as Mexico City, it would be prohibitively costly for respondents who live in the outskirts of the city to arrive to the designated place on time. Only respondents in the *colonias* surrounding the Zócalo - Azcapotzalco, Gustavo Madero, Benito Juárez, Cuauhtémoc, Miguel Hidalgo, and Venustiano Carranza - were selected for sampling.

The survey instrument was designed to be as concise and simple as possible in order to encourage participation in the follow-up component of the project. Item responses were either dichotomized or organized into four-item Likert scales, reducing indecisiveness around a middle

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<sup>9</sup> Individuals were not randomized within the household level.

option. The entire questionnaire was thoroughly vetted by Leticia Juárez, partner at BGC Beltrán y Asociados, to guarantee that the translation would be easily understood by Mexicans of any education or class background.<sup>10</sup> At various stages of the design process, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a convenience sample around the Beltrán offices to improve confidence that each item was easily understood.

The entire phone survey was timed to last for 15 minutes. The questionnaire included items to measure basic demographics, general political variables such as party ID, exposure to protests, a randomized vignette item, theoretically motivated mediator variables, and pre- and post-vignette levels of political engagement, and contact information for the follow-up component. Question order was organized to prevent priming respondents with protest-related items early in the questionnaire and to place the more difficult questions towards the end.

### **3.3 DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS**

In this section, I will provide a brief description of the demographic background among the sample. For the most part, the sample was balanced on gender and then skewed towards older, wealthy, well-educated individuals. These demographics do not necessarily reflect Mexico as a whole, or even Mexico City, but rather the individuals who live close to the city center and own a landline. The phone survey was conducted through two separate samples; the first sample was collected in late April and the second in early May. Those who were contacted in the first instance ( $n = 606$ ) were invited to the small protest, and those who were contacted in May ( $n = 600$ ) were invited to the large protest. To demonstrate that the timing of the data collection does not confound

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<sup>10</sup> All interviews were conducted in Spanish. Translations were not made for indigenous languages

the experimental results, I will distinguish between the two independent samples and test how closely they resemble one another.

First, I will examine the geographic distribution of the respondents. Here, there are noticeable differences between the two samples. Among those contacted in April 2015, no respondents were selected from Azcapotzalco or Gustavo Madero, the northernmost *colonias* in the geographic limits. A plurality of respondents - nearly half of the sample - were from Cuauhtémoc, while approximately 20% were each selected from Miguel Hidalgo and Benito Juárez. The second sample contained respondents from all six possible *colonias*, but well over half of the sample (65%) were from Cuauhtémoc. The high percentage of respondents from Cuauhtémoc is ideal *colonia* for the purposes of this project. This *colonia* is home to the Zócalo, the city center where the face-to-face interviews for the field experiment would take place, making it more likely that respondents would be able to respond to the follow-up survey.

**Table 3.3:**

<b>Geographic Distribution of Phone Survey</b>			
<i>Colonia</i>	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Azcapotzalco	0	37	37
%	0%	6.17%	3.07%
Gustavo Madero	0	43	43
%	0%	7.17%	3.57%
Benito Juárez	138	46	184
%	22.77%	7.67%	15.26%
Cuauhtémoc	299	393	692
%	49.34%	65.50%	57.38%
Miguel Hidalgo	110	48	158
%	18.15%	8.00%	13.10%
Venustiano Carranza	59	33	92
%	9.74%	5.50%	7.63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1,206</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

These *colonias* were selected because of their proximity to the Zócalo, though jointly they represent a large part of Mexico City. According to 2010 census data,<sup>11</sup> the combination of the five selected boroughs quite closely resembles the city average. Based on median age and percent of adults educated to the university level, Benito Juárez is well above-average for Mexican standards. More than half of its residents older than 15 have attended university, and the median age is nearly that of the United States (36.8) (Censo de Población y Vivienda; U.S. Census Bureau 2014). On the lower end, Gustavo Madero is somewhat below Mexico City averages. The borough with the greatest proportion of the sample, Cuauhtémoc, is slightly above the city average. For the most part, the five boroughs selected here are quite indicative of Mexico City. This is not to say that the sample is representative of Mexico as a whole, which is considerably worse off than its capital city. Relative to Mexico City, the median age for all of Mexico is five years younger, and 10% fewer of its residents older than 15 have attended university.

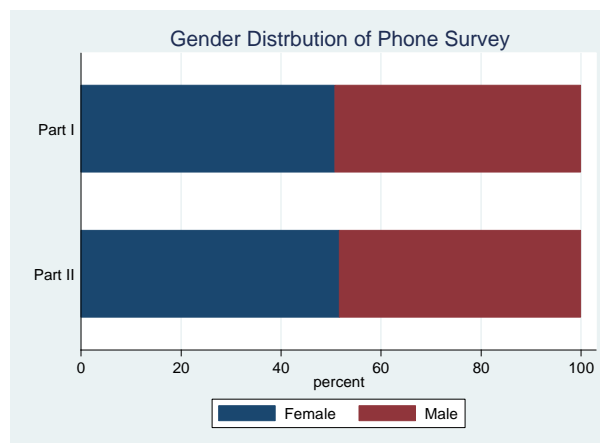
**Table 3.4:**

<i>Colonia</i> Demographics			
	Population	Median Age	University Educated (%)
Azcapotzalco	414,711	33	29.10%
Gustavo Madero	1,185,772	31	24.30%
Benito Juárez	385,439	36	58.10%
Cuauhtémoc	531,831	33	35.00%
Miguel Hidalgo	372,889	34	42.00%
Venustiano Carranza	430,978	32	25.80%
Mexico City (Total)	8,851,080	31	27.80%
Mexico (National)	112,336,538	26	16.50%

<sup>11</sup> The most recent data publicly available from INEGI

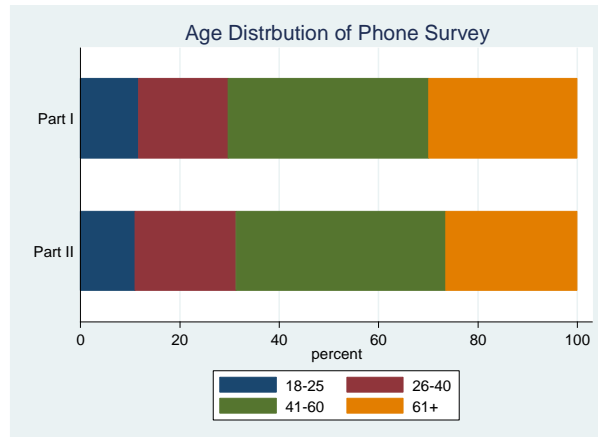
Do the geographic differences in the sample result in systematic differences between the respondents? Figure 3.1 shows that this is not the case for gender distribution. Despite the fact that no quotas were used, both samples show a nearly even split between men and women. This may have resulted from the timing of data collection, which took place in the evenings rather than the mornings when women might be more likely to answer than men.

**Figure 3.1:**



Similarly, the age distributions were very similar for both samples. As is shown in Figure 3.2, approximately 70% of the total sample was older than forty. The mean age was 50 years old (median was 51), and the maximum age was 86. This skew towards older respondents is almost certainly due to the landline sample frame.

**Figure 3.2**

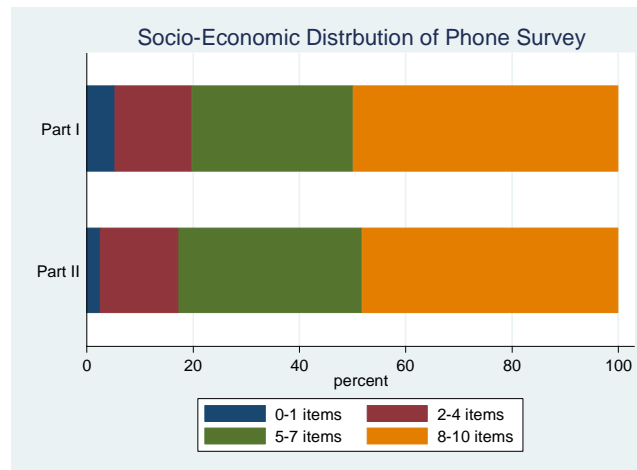


Socio-economic status was measured as an additive index of household items that the respondent may have at home. This is used as a proxy for wealth, which tends to be an uncomfortable topic for many respondents to discuss openly. I selected items that would demonstrate a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The items included a refrigerator, a computer, a washing machine, cable, a sound system, a radio, a TV, an iPad, a cell phone, and a car. Of these items, the most common one to have a home was a TV, which only 76 respondents reported not owning, and the least common item was an iPad, which 842 reported not owning.

Figure 3.3 shows that approximately half of the total sample owns most (8-10) of these items. The two independent samples show very similar patterns. The first sample has a slightly higher percentage of respondents with 0-1 items (about 5% and 2.5% respectively), and there are slightly more respondents in the second sample with 5-7 items (30% and 35%).



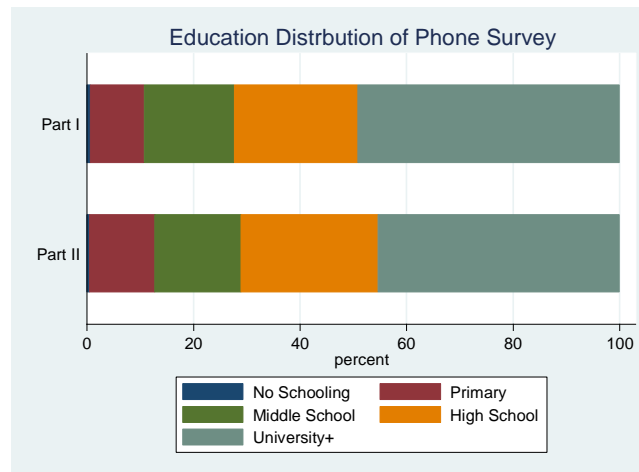
**Figure 3.3**



The education profiles of the respondents are also largely similar for both samples, although the first sample is slightly more educated than the second. Education levels for both samples are considerably higher than census data reports for the selected *colonias*. Figure 3.4 shows a simplified version of the education profile, combining “completed” and “incomplete” levels of education. For example, the respondents who entered university but did not receive their degrees yet are classified into the same category as the respondents who received a university degree. Nearly half of both samples is educated to the university level.<sup>12</sup> According to the more nuanced data, 8.24% of the total sample report to having an incomplete university education, 30.12% reporting completing university, and 8.90% have some post-graduate education. Altogether, these categories are combined so that 47.26% of the total sample is educated to the superior level, which is quite high compared to the census data.

<sup>12</sup> Sample I is slightly more educated than Sample II, with fewer respondents terminating their education in middle school and more of the sample attending university. These differences are not statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 0.674$ ).

**Figure 3.4**



Taken together, the figures in this section indicate that the two samples, despite being drawn from somewhat different geographic areas, are very similar in terms of distributions in gender, age, socio-economic status, and education. At the same time, they are not highly representative of Mexico City, and far less representative of Mexico as a whole. Relative to the total population in the selected *colonias*, the median age and level of education is fairly high. This sampling bias is considered to be normal in Mexico, where landlines are most commonly associated with higher socio-economic strata and older individuals (INEGI 2010).

### **3.4 POLITICAL VARIABLES**

The very first items in the questionnaire measure initial political engagement, before responses can be tainted by additional political items. Political engagement, as a multifaceted concept, is operationalized through six items that range from deliberative engagement to active participation, and they include institutionalized forms of action such as voting alongside contentious forms of action like protest. The first five items are asked as a battery where the

respondent is asked, “On a scale of 1 to 4 (where 1 means very likely and 4 means not at all likely), how likely are you to do the following things in the next two weeks?” The activities are: 1) talk with friends and/or family about politics, 2) read about politics in the newspaper, 3) contact a politician, 4) sign a letter with a political demand, and 5) participate in a protest. The final item, *Vote*, is asked separately to change the wording for the upcoming election. Respondents were asked, on the same scale, “how likely are you to vote in the elections on June 7<sup>th</sup>?”

Table 3.5 reports the descriptive statistics for the pre-treatment engagement indicators and the chi-squared test statistic indicating significant differences between the April and May samples. Of these items, respondents are most likely to vote in the upcoming elections and least likely to sign a petition. Interestingly, respondents are more likely to vote than they are to participate in the less costly activities like talking and reading about politics. Respondents are least likely to engage in other activities that require time and effort – signing a petition, contacting a politician, and protesting. Why does voting stand out from these activities? One possibility is that voting requires less of an initiative. Voting is scheduled for a special holiday, but citizens must decide on their own time whether to participate in the other costly forms of engagement and when they might do so. For most items, the chi-squared test indicates no significant differences between the two samples. However, respondents in the first sample report somewhat higher willingness to protest.

**Table 3.5:**

<b>Pre-Treatment Political Engagement</b>					
Variable	Range	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	$\chi^2$
Talk	1-4	1199	2.43	1.31	0.587
Read	1-4	1194	2.37	1.30	0.436
Petition	1-4	1190	1.55	1.07	0.122
Contact	1-4	1188	1.87	1.21	0.189
Protest	1-4	1194	1.68	1.11	0.060
Vote	1-4	1189	3.08	1.26	0.957

The survey instrument included a number of political items to account for differences between treatment and control groups. This is particularly important for the field component of the experiment, for which compliance cannot be controlled precisely. These variables also show the distribution of partisan support and political activity of the sample. The following tables in this section contain the distributions for key variables and Pearson's chi-squared tests to examine the correlation between distributions of the two samples.

The partisan distributions suggest very low levels of support for the three traditional political parties. Less than 10% of the total sample supports any of the three major parties (PRI, PAN, and PRD), with similar presence of panistas and priistas and particularly low support for the PRD. A follow-up question asked about the "other" parties, and support was primarily distributed among seven smaller parties: Verde, Partido del Trabajo, Convergencia, MORENA, Partido Nueva Alianza, Partido Encuentro Social, and Partido Humanista. Nearly half of all "other" supporters, or 4.59% of the total sample, identified with MORENA, a splinter party from the PRD.

According to the chi-squared test, there was a significant difference in party support between the two samples. The descriptive statistics in Table 3.6 suggest that most of this discrepancy can be explained by "other" supporters and non-partisans. It is possible that Mexicans

who reject the three main parties are somewhat indifferent between the two responses. They may be somewhat sympathetic with a minor party one week and then be frustrated with the whole political system the next week. Because most of the difference occurs in these two categories, it seems unlikely that the chi-squared test indicates an ideological or deeply rooted difference between the samples.

**Table 3.6:**

<b>Party Identification</b>			
	<b>Part I</b>	<b>Part II</b>	<b>Total</b>
PAN	49	61	110
%	8.09	10.17	9.12
PRI	62	56	118
%	10.23	9.33	9.78
PRD	44	38	82
%	7.26	6.33	6.8
Other	88	46	134
%	14.52	7.67	11.11
No Party	343	376	719
%	56.6	62.67	59.62
NR	20	23	43
%	3.3	3.83	3.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1,206</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Pearson chi2(5)= 16.9119			Pr = 0.005

Table 3.7 shows the descriptive statistics for other relevant political variables and the chi-squared test for the two independent samples. The mean respondent is somewhere between “a little” interested and “quite” interested in politics, but there is high variance around this item. The second item, *EPN Approval*, indicates support for the current president of Mexico (Enrique Peña Nieto). The low approval rating in Table 3.7 echoes the low support for his political party, the PRI, from Table 3.6.

**Table 3.7:**

<b>Political Variables</b>					
Variable	Range	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	$\chi^2$
Interest	1-4	1201	2.48	1.08	0.839
EPN Approval	1-4	1146	1.88	0.88	0.463
Protest Exposure	1-4	1180	2.31	1.23	0.149
Have Protested	0-1	1204	0.19	0.40	0.913
Debate	0-1	1206	0.41	0.49	0.974
Victim	0-1	1202	0.45	0.50	0.928

Additional variables were included in order to account for respondents' experience with protest and political conflict. *Protest Exposure* asks, "Approximately, how many protests have you *personally* seen since the beginning of the year?" Rather than relying on perfect memory recall, the respondent has a number of ranges from which to choose: 0-1 protests, 2-5 protests, 6-10 protests, and more than 10 protests. These ranges, though less precise than actual numbers, are intended to anchor responses and guard against exaggeration. Interestingly, although Mexico City experiences so many protests on a daily basis, the mean response of personally-witnessed protests *among a sample of individuals who live near the Zócalo* falls between 2-5 and 6-10 protests witnessed for the year. This alludes to the transparently self-selected nature of protest exposure. The next protest-related item is a dummy variable that asks if the respondent has participated in any protest in the past five years. Again, despite the exceptionally high frequency of protest in Mexico City, the average respondent has not participated in any protest in five years.

The *Debate* variable measures the respondent's predisposition towards political debate. This item is important for the theory of conflict seeking/aversion, which would suggest that individuals might be more likely to attend a protest if they enjoy political conflict. The item closely resembles those of Mutz (2002) and Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002). It asks, "Do you like to

discuss politics with people who don't necessarily agree with you?" Respondents are then given dichotomous response options. The average is quite near the middle; 715 respondents say "no," and 491, "yes."

The last substantive item in the questionnaire relates to personal experience with political violence.<sup>13</sup> Because political violence was a theme for all of the protest treatments, it was important to see how many respondents might have a personal connection to the protest demands. The specific item asks, "Do you know someone personally who has been a victim of organized crime?" Implicitly, a respondent who had been personally victimized would also respond affirmatively to this item. The distribution of responses is normatively very troubling. Nearly half the sample (538=1 ; 664=0) knows someone who has been a victim of organized violence.

The topic of political violence was critical for this item and throughout the survey instrument, so it was important that this concept translated well to the target audience. In English, we generally refer to violent threats, abduction, and killing of individuals for political causes as, "political violence." More specific terms – such as organized crime, terrorism, police brutality, etc. - might be used if one were absolutely certain who committed the crime. However, because blame attribution is not so simple for these crimes, I originally used the term "political violence" for the English version of survey instrument. This term did not translate well into Spanish, or to the Mexican audience specifically. During pre-treatment, the direct translation of political violence, *violencia política*, left respondents very confused, and experts at BGC Beltrán recommended the alternative description, "violence from organized crime" and was sometimes abbreviated as, "organized crime."

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<sup>13</sup> In order to prevent this sensitive topic from disrupting the flow of the survey, it was included as the very last item – after the vignettes, the mediators and the post-treatment engagement indicators.

### 3.5 TREATMENTS

The remainder of the questionnaire is devoted to the two types of protest-exposure treatments - a vignette experiment that represents media exposure to protests and a quasi-experiment in the field that uses a real protest as the treatment. Although the treatments measure the same concept – exposure to protests – they represent very different types of exposure and face distinct constraints. The vignette experiment was designed to resemble a news story about a protest. Of course, the advantage of a vignette experiment vis-à-vis a real news story is the ability to personally manipulate the characteristics of the event and to randomize exposure. In isolation, this treatment is not a sufficient test of protest exposure. Protesters do use the media to spread awareness of their cause, but they also march, cause traffic jams, interrupt public events in the hope of spreading awareness through public disruption and confrontation. Certainly, hearing about a protest in the news is almost certainly different from encountering the event in real life. Protests are highly theatrical, and one would not expect to respond to a performance they saw in theaters in the same way as they would respond while reading a summary of the performance. The experimental design aims to measure *both* types of exposure – media and confrontational – with the expectation that the effects would diverge. Does the effect of the protest remain the same for both types of exposure? Do both types of exposure have the same potential for impact?

#### 3.5.1 Vignette Treatment

To introduce the second half of the survey instrument, the enumerator reads a vignette of a fictional, though plausible, news story.<sup>14</sup> Four out of every five respondents hear a story about a

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<sup>14</sup> This is a relatively long vignette for a phone survey. To help respondents keep their attention, we timed it to last *no longer* than one minute, and we pre-tested the vignette several times until respondents confirmed that it did not feel long. We also introduced the vignette by telling respondents that they would have to answer some



protest against organized violence in Mexico. The vignette follows a factorial design with two factors (size and level of violence) with two levels for each ([thousands of participants / a small group] and [march with little candles, ended peacefully / angry march with torches, ended in a violent confrontation with police], and resulted in four possible combinations. The treatment is intended to foreshadow the protests from the subsequent stage of the experiment. Below is the English version of the treatment vignette:

“Recently in Mexico City, **[thousands of / a small group of]** students and people from different civil society organizations marched with **[torches / small candles]**<sup>15</sup> from the Paseo de la Reforma to the Zócalo to demand that the federal government put an end to the violence and corruption related to drug trafficking. In memory of the normalistas in Ayotzinapa, protesters stated that they would continue to march until there was peace and justice in Mexico. Some claimed that the government of Mexico was responsible for the crimes that took place; others marched simply because they were tired of the violence in Mexico. **[The protest, a multitude of candles lit in the hope of ending violence, interrupted traffic routes. The march caused traffic jams for several hours in the city center and ultimately ended peacefully. / The march interrupted traffic routes, causing traffic jams for several hours in the city center. The protest ended in clashes with the police, who used tear gas and rubber bullets**<sup>16</sup> **to disperse the protesters.**

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questions on what they heard so they might pay closer attention to contact. In the near future, I hope to run some more thorough manipulation checks on small Mexican landline sample.

<sup>15</sup> The candles/torches component is part of the violent/peaceful randomization and does not introduce a new factor to the design.

<sup>16</sup> Rubber bullets were only mentioned in the large/violent vignette. It would have been unrealistic to include them in the small/violent vignette.

**According to initial reports, several participants were arrested and others were brought to local hospitals.]”**

Given the multitude of protests that occur in Mexico City on a regular basis, it would not be surprising to any respondent that this protest may have actually occurred. Furthermore, the enormous diversity of marches following the events Ayotzinapa would make any of the four versions of the protest (small/violent, small/peaceful/ large/violent, and large/peaceful) very realistic and credible. The vignettes were pre-tested and timed multiple times to maximize the amount of time that respondents would listen to the content without becoming distracted or frustrated.

One in every five respondents received a control version of the vignette. The control version was designed to contain the same basic information without including any mention of a protest. To make this possible, the control vignette discussed the results of a recently published survey that contained the general messages as the protest. Namely, the survey mentions that a majority of citizens are tired with organized crime in Mexico since the events in Ayotzinapa, but there is no consensus regarding the culpability of the crimes or what should be done about it. This vignette controls for the possibility that the respondent changes their opinions by mechanisms that are not explicitly related to the protest. Perhaps the protest treatments have an effect because the respondent wants to follow the crowd? If this is the case, the control version should capture the same effect by incorporating the protest message into a consensus in public opinion. Alternatively, to account for the possibility that the effect of protests stems from the divisions they reflect, the control vignette describes a sharp division in public opinion to attribute blame for the violence. The English version of the control vignette appears below:

A recently published survey shows that a majority of citizens are tired with the level of violence in the country, but there is some disagreement about who is responsible for the violence and what should be done to establish peace. The survey follows the unfortunate occurrences that took place in Iguala (Guerrero) and seeks to understand what Mexican citizens think about the violence from organized crime and what should be done about it.

### **3.5.2. Field Treatment**

For the street exposure treatment, respondents were invited to one of three events: a small protest, a large protest, and an event with no protest. Treatment assignment was based on date of initial contact, which is safely considered random given the closeness of the samples in April and May. All respondents contacted in April for the phone survey were invited to the small protest, and all respondents in May were invited to the large protest. For the no-protest event, respondents who did not attend either event were re-contacted and re-invited.

To be clear, the procedures I use to assign individuals to treatment groups are not random, and treatment compliance is not random. Because they were re-contacted, respondents in the re-invited group may differ from respondents who were only invited. Or perhaps first-time compliers are different because they self-select to attend the interview more eagerly than their re-contacted counterparts. Furthermore, the type of person who complied with the invitation is quite rare and almost certainly different from those who did not comply. Because the design was unable to completely randomize the field experiment, I account for imbalances and self-selection in the analysis stage. As I will explain in greater detail in Chapter 4, I use inverse probability weighting to calculate treatment effects between treatment and control groups, and I estimate selection models to detect and adjust for self-selection bias in the compliance process. Table 3.8 illustrates

the quasi-experimental design of the field experiment and identifies the analytical strategy I use to adjust for non-random assignment.

**Table 3.8:**

**Quasi-Experimental Design and Analysis**

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Non-Randomness</b>	<b>Analysis Stage</b>
Treatment Assignment	Small Protest Large Protest Control	Random assignment between small and large protests; control respondents re-invited	Inverse probability weighting balancing treatment and control groups
Treatment Compliance	Treatment Compliers Treatment Non-Compliers Control Compliers Control Non-Compliers	All respondents were invited, only few self-select into the sample	Calculate treatment effects with selection model, correcting for the differences between attendees and non-attendees

The small protest was organized by the Plantón por Ayotzinapa, a group demanding justice for the Ayotzinapa victims. The group maintained a small campsite - including food, tents, thematically relevant art, and information about the movement – with twenty-four hour presence in front of the attorney general’s office on the Paseo de la Reforma in the city center. They began camping in December 2014 in order to apply constant pressure on the Mexican government for the events of September. While this dissertation is being written, they were still camping. They organize cultural events and demonstrations on a regular basis, on some occasions organizing more than once a day. Most events are very small, involving a few hundred participants, and depend on a network of highly dedicated activists and their presence on social media.

The small protest took place on April 26<sup>th</sup> between 4-6 pm. It began at the Ángel de la Independencia on the Paseo de la Reforma, where earlier that day the plantón had erected a monument to the 43 victims, and culminated at the Zócalo. It is highly unlikely that survey respondents would have anticipated the march because details of the event were not publicly dispersed in the media. Indeed, the march was a relatively low priority event for the day. The morning began with a large cultural event with 43 speakers and an opportunity for artists to create sculptures of turtles to represent the slow progress towards justice. The few flyers that were distributed among activist organizations provided details of these earlier events, but not for the march that would follow hours later.<sup>17</sup> Approximately 300 people attended the late afternoon march, many of them wearing the turtle sculptures on their backs as they marched down Reforma. A photo of this event, posted on the twitter account for @plantonporayotzi, appears below. For this first event, a team from BGC Beltrán waited in a Starbucks café located at the Ángel de la

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<sup>17</sup> I only was aware of the details of the march by close communications with key activists at the Plantón.

Independencia between 4-6 pm. The café has large windows facing the Ángel to maximize visualization of the protest.

**Figure 3.5**  
**Small Protest**



The large protest took place on May 15<sup>th</sup> and was organized by the National Union for Teachers (CNTE). In Mexico, May 15<sup>th</sup> is a National Day for Teachers, and in 2015 the unions decided to celebrate their day with a massive protest. As is the case with most large protests, there were a diverse set of interests represented at the march. There was a call for education reform, and on the other hand, but a significant proportion of the attendants demanded justice for the 43 *normalista* students. Since the events of September 26<sup>th</sup>, the Ayotzinapa protests were heavily supported by teachers' unions, who felt solidarity for the victimized teachers and students.

The protest was massive. Estimates suggest that there were 5,000 participants, with representatives from sections 7, 9, 14, 18, 22, and 23 of CNTE in addition to representatives from the families of the Ayotzinapa victims. The original route went from San Cosme, passed through the city center, and then ended at the Zócalo. The day of the march, to accommodate the size of

the protest, they changed the route to end at Bellas Artes, where the team from BGC Beltrán was waiting for respondents in a café called Cielito. Despite the fact that there were policemen throughout the route, directing traffic and restraining the protesters, the march ended peacefully. A photo of the march from @Coordinadora1DM appears below:

**Figure 3.6**  
**Large Protest**



Upon arrival at both protest events, survey enumerators were instructed to administer a manipulation check. Before asking substantive questions, they asked each respondent, “Did you see the protest going on outside?” The purpose of this item was to call attention to the protest treatment even if respondents had not noticed it independently.

CNTE and the teachers continued to protest in the city center for several weeks following the second protest. In order to conduct the control event without protest interference, we had to wait until mid-June for the mobilizations to die out. On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the BGC Beltrán team waited between 3-7 in a Starbucks on Reforma (close to the Parque Chapultepec and far from the Zócalo, to minimize the possibility of protest exposure).



### 3.6 POST-TREATMENT QUESTIONNAIRES

The last substantive items in both the phone and field survey instruments measure the causal mediators and then reevaluate political engagement after the treatment. Just as the causal arrow follows from the treatment to the intermediary variable to the final outcome, the survey instrument measures the mediators immediately after the treatment and then measures the dependent variables. The mediators and post-treatment outcomes were measured after both treatments. To clarify, respondents in the field component of the experiment answered these questions twice – once over the phone for the vignette treatment and once in the face-to-face interview.

As specified in the previous chapter, I identified three mediating mechanisms to link protests to public engagement: emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy. Ideally, all of these variables would be measured through batteries of multiple items, but the length-constraints of the questionnaire demanded the items be more concise. Consistent with the literature, emotions are measured separately as positive and negative emotions. Respondents were asked, “if you were walking around the city center and you saw a protest like the one described,<sup>18</sup> on a scale of 1-4 where 1 is not at all and 4 is a lot, would you feel...” followed by the options: 1) nervous, 2) enthusiastic, 3) frustrated, 4) proud.<sup>19</sup> Conflict seeking is measured by presenting the issue of criminal violence as a debate, in which one side claims that the federal government is responsible for the violence while the other side believes it to be a local issue. The question then asks, “Regardless of where you stand on this debate, how likely are you to discuss these issues with

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<sup>18</sup> The control group item did not mention a protest, but asked how the respondent would feel upon *hearing the news* – not seeing the protest - described.

<sup>19</sup> Intuitively, it seems insufficient to measure something as deep as an emotion by such a simple approach. However, this is precisely how many large surveys, including the American National Election Study, measure emotional mediators (Valentino et al. 2011).

people who do not necessarily agree with you?” Finally, efficacy is operationalized as internal and external efficacy. For internal efficacy, I ask how informed the respondent feels about political matters in Mexico. For external efficacy, I include a battery that asks to what extent the respondent agrees that agents (“people like me,” “the protests against violence,” “social movements”) can influence politics in Mexico and whether politicians care about what citizens think. For clarity and parsimony, I generated an index ( $\alpha = .71$  in the field experiment and  $.64$  in the vignette experiment) from these individual indicators.

To measure post-treatment engagement, I included the same basic variables from initial engagement variables (talking to friends and/or family, reading news, signing a petition, contacting a politician, protesting, and voting). The items are framed somewhat differently the second time around in order to allow respondents to provide different answers to what is essentially the same question. In the post-treatment battery, the variables are framed around the issue of political violence. For example, rather than asking how likely it is that a respondent will discuss politics with friends and family, the post-treatment version of the item asks how likely it is that a respondent will discuss the issue of drug-related violence with friends and family.

The field experiment also provided an opportunity to evaluate observable behavior, rather than stated willingness to engage in politics. After finishing the written questionnaire during the face-to-face interview, the survey enumerators asked each respondent if they would like to sign a petition against organized crime and/or take home a pamphlet of information about the protests. The team from BGC Beltrán helped to write the petition to elicit signatures from a wide-range of respondents. In order to avoid pushing away respondents, the petition described very moderate demands such as justice and accountability, and it deliberately avoided the inflammatory language of some protest groups and politically divisive demands (such as the president’s resignation from

office). Respondents were also asked if they would like to receive some information about the protests. To accommodate this request, the survey enumerators distributed pamphlets given to us by the Plantón por Ayotzinapa to respondents who responded affirmatively. With the addition of these items, I removed the *Petition* item from the willingness to engage indicators in the field instrument to avoid repetition.

## **4.0 THE DIRECT EFFECTS OF PROTESTS ON ENGAGEMENT**

Can protests increase or decrease political engagement? In this chapter, I will examine the direct effects of the two experimental designs separately. For both experiments, I will describe the strategy for identifying causal effects and report the results of the empirical analysis. Both experiments demonstrate that protests influence political engagement, but they do so in opposite directions. In the vignette experiment, treated respondents (particularly those treated with the *Big/Violent* protest vignette) are more willing to engage in politics than the control group. Meanwhile, in the field experiment, treated respondents (particularly in the large protest group) are *less* willing to engage when compared to the control group. To make appropriate comparisons between the two experiments, I then reexamine the treatment effects of the field experiment using a selection model. Finally, I test for heterogeneous effects of the vignette treatments, and I find that the treatment effects are strongest among respondents who support the underlying motives of the protest.

### **4.1 VIGNETTE EXPERIMENT**

#### **4.1.1 Vignette Experiment: Causal Identification**

The vignette experiment in the second half of the phone survey was designed to provide a protest stimulus and measure the pathways by which that stimulus could drive engagement. The protest stimulus came in the form of a brief news report that is read by the enumerator, and it was written to sound like a plausible news story that the respondent might hear on the radio. Using five

versions of the news story (2x2 and a control), the treatment randomized key characteristics of the protest stimulus to test if different protests might trigger distinct effects.

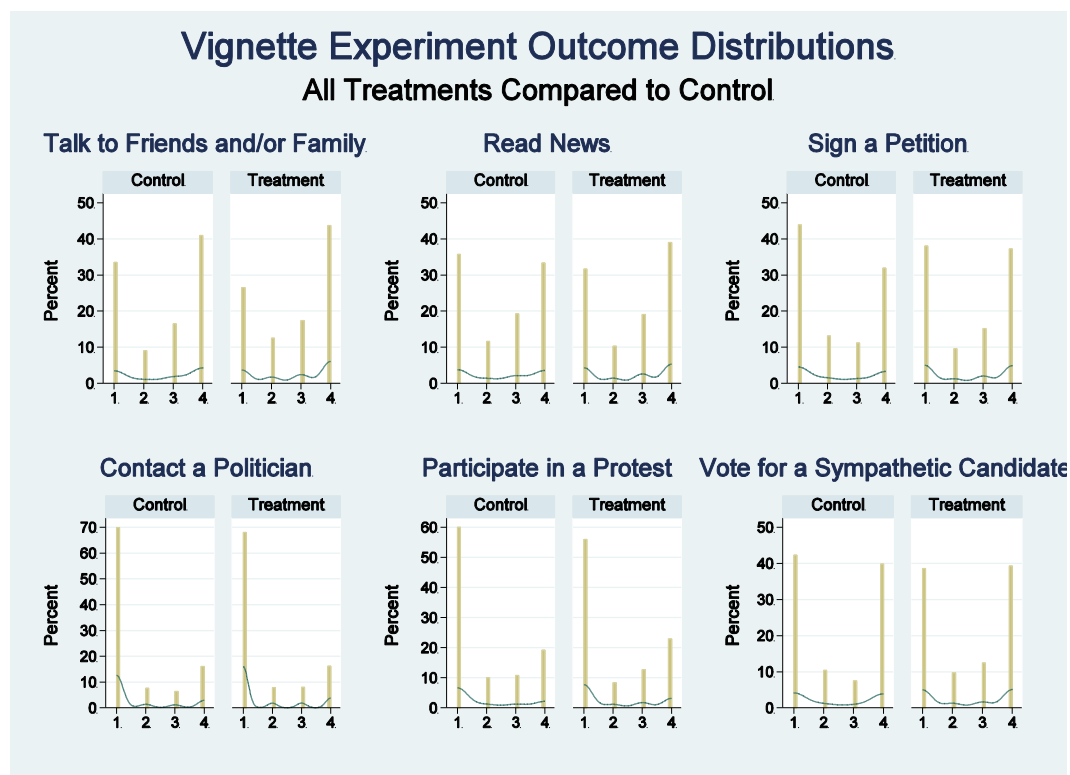
This design allowed for a high degree of experimenter control over the treatment. Owing to surveyor control over treatment administration, compliance was directly observable. It is customary in these types of experiments to assume that the respondents received equal exposure to the different variations of the treatment. Indeed, survey experiments do not face the same limitations as observational data or a typical field experiment because neither treatment assignment nor compliance is a function of self-selection. In the end, there were nearly equal numbers of respondents in each cell (the lowest number of respondents per cell was 224, and the highest was 258). As a result of randomization, the only difference between treatment groups is the version of the vignette received, and differences between groups reflects the impact of having heard a particular version of the protest story (or public opinion poll, in the case of the control). The statistical models include indicators for each version of the treatment while assigning the control version as the reference group. Thus, the marginal effect of each treatment represents the effect of receiving a specific protest condition relative to the control vignette.

#### **4.1.2 Vignette Experiment: Results**

Figure 4.1 shows the distributions of the engagement indicators for the control group and treatment groups in the post-treatment outcomes. For parsimony, I have combined all of the treatment groups so that the difference between the treatment and control represents exposure to any vignette with a protest. The distributions reveal interesting information about the participatory patterns of the respondents. Clearly, of all the indicators, respondents were least likely to contact a politician. This is surprising because signing a petition was the least popular item only a few

minutes prior in the survey before the vignettes. Approximately 70% of both groups reported that they were very unlikely to engage in this form of engagement. It is plausible that a reminder of the events in Ayotzinapa triggered a widespread distrust of politicians. Respondents were nearly as unlikely to participate in a protest. For all other engagement indicators, the responses appear more or less bimodal, with clear stacking at both extremes.

**Figure 4.1:**



For many of the engagement indicators, there are observable differences between the control and treatment groups. Relative to the control group, the treatment groups demonstrate greater willingness to participate in nearly all of the participatory acts, with the least noticeable differences present for contacting a politician. For nearly all acts, there is a decline in the number of respondents who report being “very unlikely” to participate (indicated by a score of 1) when

respondents are primed with a protest vignette. The protest-treated respondents have greater representation on the higher end of the scale, with higher frequencies at scores of 3 and 4.

Table 4.1 below report the regression results for the effects of the individual protest treatments. The table shows results from a series of logit models that regress the treatment, demographic, and political variables on the engagement indicators. Because the treatment variables are assigned randomly, the additional variables are not necessary as controls for confoundedness. However, they are useful to compare the antecedents and correlates of various types of engagement.

Although the dependent variables were measured using Likert response scales, I modeled them as binary outcomes, where 0 represents a score of 1 or 2 for willingness to participate in each activity and, and 1 indicates score of 3 or 4. These transformations are more consistent with the distributions of most responses, which tended to stack heavily on the lowest and highest extremes of the scale. Logit models also ease the interpretation of the results relative to ordered models. All results are displayed in terms of marginal effects to so that the magnitude of the effect can be interpreted directly from the table.

**Table 4.1:**

**Vignette Experiment, Marginal Effects**  
**DV: 1=likely, very likely to engage**

VARIABLES	(1) Talk	(2) Read	(3) Petition	(4) Contact	(5) Protest	(6) Vote
Small/Peaceful	0.022 (0.042)	0.073+ (0.043)	0.037 (0.045)	0.041 (0.041)	0.022 (0.042)	0.009 (0.045)
Big/Peaceful	0.018 (0.043)	0.062 (0.043)	0.063 (0.044)	0.006 (0.040)	0.069 (0.042)	-0.001 (0.045)
Small/Violent	-0.074+ (0.045)	-0.020 (0.045)	0.075+ (0.045)	0.004 (0.041)	-0.000 (0.043)	0.020 (0.046)
Big/Violent	0.088* (0.043)	0.039 (0.045)	0.099* (0.046)	-0.006 (0.041)	-0.003 (0.042)	0.117* (0.046)
Male	0.036 (0.029)	0.035 (0.029)	0.071* (0.030)	0.021 (0.026)	0.055* (0.027)	0.071* (0.030)
Education	0.006 (0.007)	0.009 (0.008)	-0.018* (0.008)	-0.002 (0.007)	-0.002 (0.007)	0.001 (0.008)
Items Index	0.005 (0.006)	0.010 (0.006)	0.019** (0.006)	-0.001 (0.006)	0.003 (0.006)	0.015* (0.007)
Traditional Partisan	0.014 (0.033)	0.042 (0.034)	-0.002 (0.035)	0.034 (0.031)	-0.069* (0.031)	0.090** (0.035)
Political Interest	0.061*** (0.014)	0.050*** (0.015)	0.038* (0.015)	0.047*** (0.013)	0.055*** (0.013)	0.057*** (0.015)
EPN Approval	-0.036* (0.017)	-0.040* (0.017)	-0.048** (0.018)	0.015 (0.015)	-0.060*** (0.016)	0.034+ (0.018)
Debater	0.103** (0.031)	0.093** (0.032)	-0.001 (0.032)	0.026 (0.028)	-0.012 (0.028)	0.060+ (0.033)
Number of Protests	0.028* (0.012)	0.015 (0.012)	0.023+ (0.012)	0.022* (0.011)	0.050*** (0.011)	-0.038** (0.012)
Protester	0.030 (0.039)	0.062 (0.039)	0.150*** (0.040)	0.019 (0.034)	0.251*** (0.039)	0.100* (0.040)
Victim	-0.004 (0.030)	0.031 (0.031)	0.025 (0.031)	-0.015 (0.027)	0.038 (0.028)	0.037 (0.031)
Observations	1,113	1,105	1,109	1,107	1,108	1,074

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

Before discussing the effects of protests, I will briefly address the covariates for the models.

Overall, the results presented in Table 4.1 corroborate with expectations on political engagement.

This is reassuring because it suggests that the indicators used to operationalize engagement are

reliable measures. Despite the fact that the post-treatment engagement indicators are focused on



the specific political issue of organized crime, the indicators are highly correlated with the traditional antecedents of political participation. For example, *Political Interest* is the most consistent predictor for each of the dependent variables, from talking about politics to protest behavior. Deliberative forms of participation (*Talk* and *Read*) are more likely among those who enjoy political debates, and more active forms of participation (*Petition*, *Protest*, and *Vote*) are more likely among those who have participated in protests. In terms of political affiliation, respondents who are critical of President Peña Nieto are more participatory, but the presidents' supporters are more likely to vote. The model for *Vote* closely resembles traditional predictors of voting before; wealthier, politically active and interested, and partisan individuals are more likely to vote than their poorer, more ambivalent, and unattached counterparts. Thus, on the whole, the indicators for engagement are consistent with what we would expect from traditional models of participation. Self-reported exposure to protests shows intriguing effects. Higher reported exposure to protests is correlated with higher willingness engage across the board; protest-exposed individuals are more likely to *Talk*, *Petition*, *Contact*, and *Protest* than their less exposed counterparts. They are, however, less likely to vote.

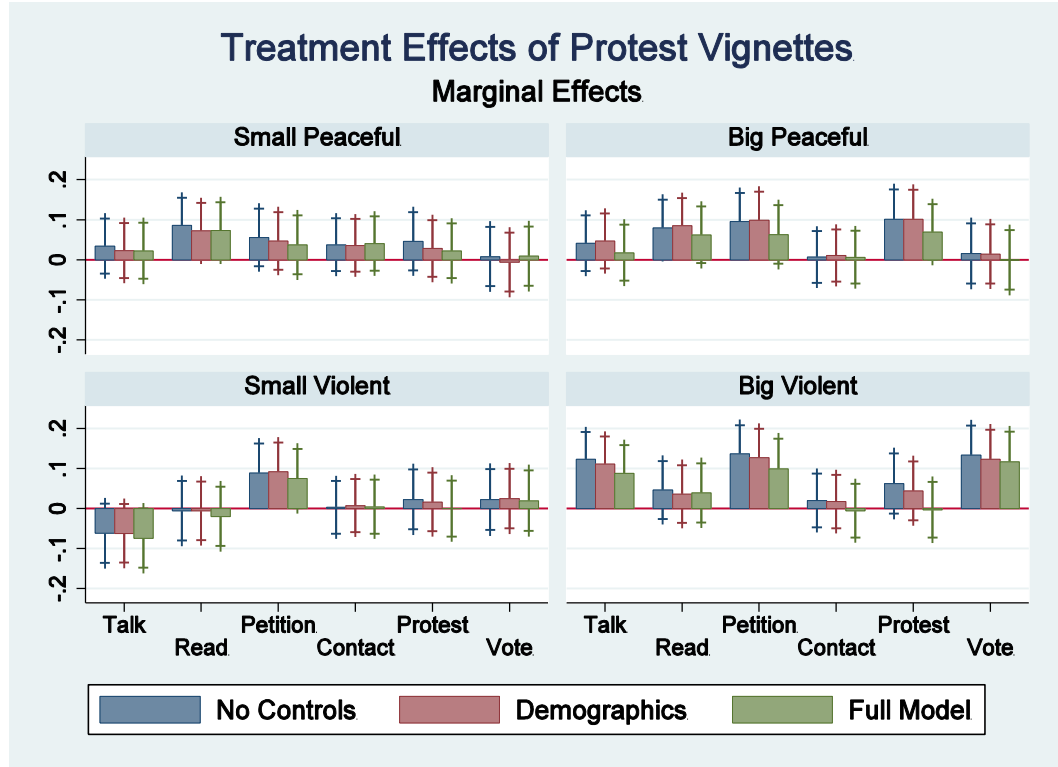
Regarding the protest vignettes, Table 4.1 shows that hearing about a protest - as one would on the radio – can make individuals more likely to engage in political issues. Upon hearing about a recent protest against organized crime, respondents were significantly more likely to consider talking about, signing a petition against, or voting base on organized crime. These effects are strongest and most consistent for the large, violent protest treatment. When briefly primed with a news story about such a protest, respondents are 8.7% more likely to talk about the issue with their friends or family, 10% more likely to sign a petition about organized crime, and 12% more likely to vote for a sympathetic candidate. By comparison, these effects are greater than the effect of

gender which, according to most models of participation, is an important predictor of political engagement. In fact, the *Big/Violent* vignette has the most consistent impact of any other variable in the model.

There are also significant, direct effects for the *Small/Violent* vignette, though these effects are only significant at the 90% level. As is shown in Table 4.1, this treatment has a negative effect on the respondent's willingness to talk about organized crime and a positive effect on petition signing. The magnitude of these effects are relatively strong; receiving this treatment makes the respondent 8% less likely to talk and 8% more likely to sign a petition. Without examining the mediating mechanisms behind these effects, one cannot say for certain why these effects take place, why some dependent variables are impacted more than others, or why violent protests are more capable of engendering direct effects than peaceful protests.

Figure 4.2 illustrates the treatment effects of each vignette for different model specifications. The blue bars represent the model with no controls, the pink bars include only demographic variables (*Sex, Items, Education, and Traditional Partisanship*), and the green bars include the entire list of covariates. The full model in this figure is the same model estimated for Table 4.1. A comparison of all models in Figure 4.2 suggests that the results are fairly robust to the inclusion of covariates, although the marginal effects of the treatments tend to decrease as more controls are added. Statistical significance does not vary for most models, with the clear exception of the *Big/Peaceful* treatment. This vignette results in positive increases in *Read, Petition, and Protest* for the reduced model and the demographic model, but these effects are insignificant when all of the covariates are included.

Figure 4.2:



Upon closer analysis, I found the culprit variable to be *EPN Support*. Although this variable does not noticeably drive outcomes for other treatment effects, presidential support seems to confound the effects for the *Big/Peaceful* protest vignette. In Section 4.4, I demonstrate that this variable is a significant moderator of the treatment effect.

## 4.2 FIELD EXPERIMENT

### 4.2.1 Field Experiment: Causal Identification

The causal effect of the field experiment is not so straight-forward to identify. The challenge of experimentation is to compare the observable outcome of a treatment with the counterfactual situation of what *would have* happened in the absence of treatment. To a great

extent, randomization makes this comparison possible by creating two groups that differ only to the extent to which they are exposed to the exogenously assigned treatment. Formulated in terms of potential outcomes,  $Y_i(T_i = t)$  is the potential outcome under treatment status,  $t$ , for every individual,  $i$ . Under this notation,  $T_i = 1$  when  $i$  receives the treatment and  $T_i = 0$  when  $i$  does not receive treatment. For each  $i$ , we only observe the outcome  $Y_i(T_i = 1)$  or the outcome  $Y_i(T_i = 0)$ , but never both simultaneously. Assuming that the groups are perfectly randomized so that all differences are balanced between groups, the effect of the treatment,  $\delta$ , can be defined as  $\delta_i = E[Y_i(T_i = 1) - Y_i(T_i = 0)]$ .

When the group of individuals that receives treatment differs from the group that does not, the estimated treatment effect includes the effect of the treatment in addition to the differences between the groups. Formally, this creates a distinction between  $T_i$ , or the treatment assignment for each  $i$ , and  $D_i$ , or the individual's compliance with treatment assignment. If non-compliance were entirely random, it would still be possible to estimate treatment effects by comparing treatment and control groups, but non-compliance tends to result from a process of self-selection. When compliance is a function of self-selection, the calculation of the average effect is biased by the omitted variables that determine  $D_i$ .

Pilot tests of the project protocol indicated that non-compliance would be very high; most of the respondents who answered the phone interview would not attend the face-to-face interview in order to receive treatment group they were assigned. The high non-compliance rate is intrinsic to the design of the project and was not responsive to changes in incentives or mechanisms. Furthermore, it was highly likely that the individuals who were assigned to be treated but decide not to collect their compensation were different from those who do decide to attend.

I employ safeguards at the design stage and the analysis stage to rectify the problem of non-random compliance. For the design of the experiment, I directly compare the group of compliers in the control group with their complying counterparts in the treatment group. That is, I accept that the set of compliers in the treatment group is likely to be different from the non-compliers on key covariates,  $X$ . Rather than attempt to isolate and measure every covariate in vector  $X$ , we can create a scenario where a subset of individuals in the control group are similar on values of  $X$ . By creating exactly the same circumstances by which compliers differ from non-compliers in the treatment *and* control groups, we can assume that the two groups only differ with respect to the presence of absence of treatment.

In order to recreate the groups such that the compliers in the treatment group are equivalent to those in the control group, the pre-treatment questionnaires asked that *all* respondents to go through the same process of being interviewed and re-interviewed. The control and treatment groups are pooled from exactly the same set of respondents who express interest in participating in a follow-up study, and they are asked to go to a directly comparable location as the treatment group. The only difference is the day in which they are asked to arrive, such that one group encounters a protest and the other does not.

Who are these compliers? For both treatment and control events, the compliers are a subsample of the respondents of the phone survey who expressed interest in attending the follow-up interview. Of the entire phone sample, 40% of respondents ( $n=478$  of 1,198) indicated an interest in the face-to-face follow-up. The 60% ( $n=720$ ) who refused to participate in the study gave a number of reasons. Many were too busy, were occupied on the days offered, or simply saw no reason to go. Many others admitted that the face-to-face follow-up seemed suspicious, and they were worried about falling victim to some sort of trap.

**Table 4.2:****Contacting Potential Compliers:**

	<b>Provided Cellphone</b>		<b>Provided Email</b>	
	N	%	N	%
No	250	52.3	298	62.34
Yes	228	47.7	180	37.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>100</b>

Not all of the 478 respondents who were open to the idea of attending the follow-up interview were equally likely to comply.<sup>20</sup> Of these respondents, only 37% (n=180) provided an email address, 48% (n=228) provided a cellphone number, and 23% (n=108) provided both. This information was used to send reminders closer to the date and give confirmatory details about the timing and location of the interview. The 37% of respondents who did not provide this information - and the greater (unknown) number who provided misleading information - were not likely to remember to attend or to know when and where to arrive. Ultimately, a total of 300 respondents – minus those respondents who provided disingenuous contact information – were considered to be potential compliers.

**Table 4.3:****Compliance Rates**

	<b>N attended</b>	<b>% with contact</b>	<b>% phone sample</b>
Small Protest	16	5%	1%
Large Protest	54	18%	5%
Control	19	6%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>7%</b>

<sup>20</sup> In Section 4.3, I examine compliance more thoroughly and incorporate this information into the statistical model.

Of these 300 potential compliers, 89 attended a follow-up interview event. The small protest event resulted in 16 respondents, 54 in the large protest event, and 19 respondents in the control event. Of all of these attendees, only one respondent was unable to be identified with a match in the phone survey. This respondent, who attended the large protest, was removed from the field data, resulting in a total of 88 compliers. It is hard to know exactly why the large protest event resulted in much higher turnout than the other events, but the likely explanation is the timing. This event took place on a Friday in the late afternoon/early evening, just as many people would have been leaving work downtown.

Although I restrict the analysis to only compare compliers across groups, there is still a possibility that the respondents who attend the control group event are different from those who attend a treatment event. It might be that differences result from different schedules, as the events take place on different days of the week, or they may result from re-contacting, or they might result from some variable related to engagement.

I use inverse probability weighting (IPW) to account for residual differences between the treatment-group compliers and control-group compliers. IPW is a two-step estimation procedure that corrects for differences between treatment and control groups. First, it computes the inverse probability weights as the inverse of the probability of receiving treatment, given  $X$  covariates, or  $1/Pr(T=1/X)$ . Next, it calculates the differences between the newly weighted means. Thus, this method corrects for the observable differences between treatment and control groups before assessing the differences between those groups on the outcomes.

In finite samples, the usefulness of methods such as IPW hinges on the overlap assumption. This assumption states that  $0 < \Pr(t_i)|X < 1$  for all treatment levels. That is, every respondent must have some chance of being assigned to the treatment group or the control group. IPW is highly sensitive to overlap; if the treatment model is too restrictive, and if the data show that there are covariate patterns for which there are no respondents in either the treatment or control groups, the weights will be too large and the estimates unstable.

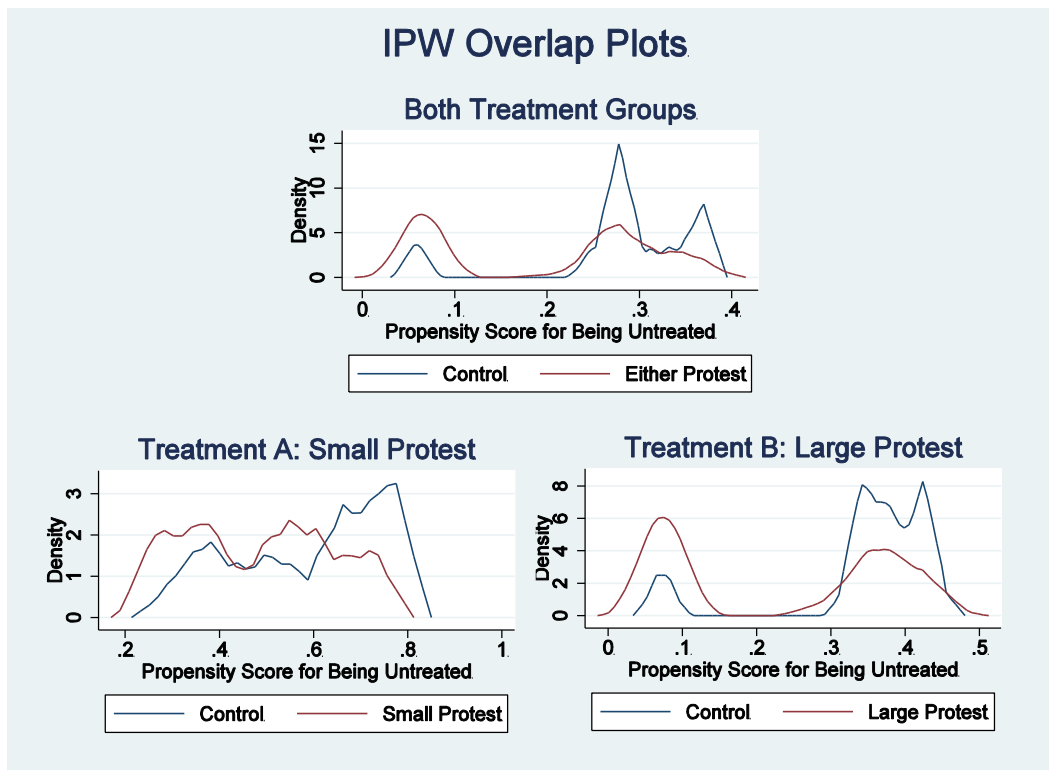
To generate the weights, I modeled treatment assignment as a function of the following covariates: political interest, partisanship, willingness to debate, past protest behavior, and knowing a victim of organized crime. Although I attempted to work with protests that were not advertised in advance, theoretically these variables might influence an individual's choice to be re-interviewed on a day when there is an Ayotzinapa protest relative to a day without a protest. I did not include additional variables because every variable omitted from the model imposed high restrictions on the overlap assumption. Not only were these variables too highly correlated with one value of treatment assignment, but they do not explain treatment assignment in a way that is conceptually distinct from the selected variables.

Figure 4.3 shows the overlap plots of the treatment assignment model. The top figure combines both treatment groups, and the bottom figures address each separately. Given the covariates listed above, there are no large masses at either 0 or 1. That is, the treatment model is not so restrictive that it perfectly predicts assignment to the control group or either of the treatment groups. In fact, the treatment model shows very clear overlap of density masses, particularly for the large protest treatment and the combined treatments. As an additional check, I ran a test on each model to identify any observations that violate the overlap assumptions and found zero



violations. These tests provide sufficient evidence that the predicted inverse-probability weights should not be too large to compute stable estimates.

**Figure 4.3:**

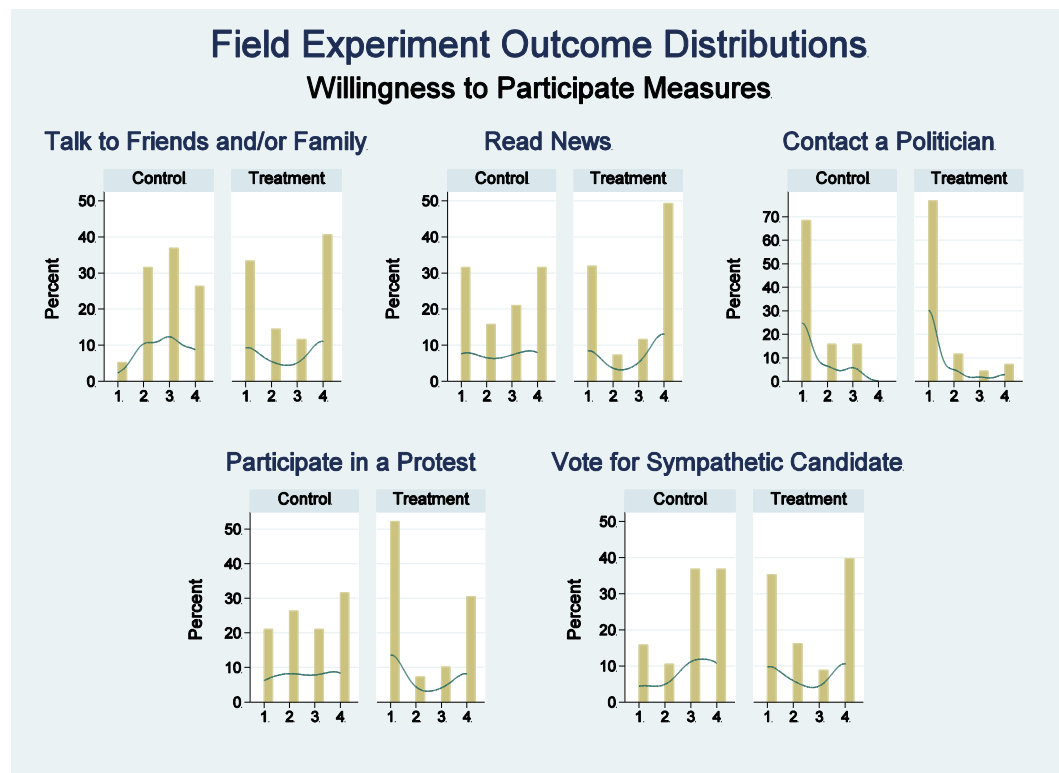


#### 4.2.2 Field Experiment: Results

Figure 4.4 presents the distributions of the engagement indicators for the control group and treatment groups in the post-treatment outcomes. As with the vignette experiment, I have combined all of the treatment groups so that the difference between the treatment and control is exposure to either of the protest treatments. Mode differences make it imprudent to compare the control group of the vignette experiment to the control of the field experiment, and similarly difficult to interpret a difference-in-difference model using pre-treatment engagement measured in the phone survey. However, it is worth noting that the differences between the baseline

responses and follow-up interviews concur with the widely-held expectation that face-to-face interactions tend to result in more socially desirable responses. Relative to the pre-treatment engagement measures and the phone survey control group, very few respondents in the face-to-face control group are willing to tell the enumerator that they are “not at all likely” to participate in the political activities. Responses tend to be much more centered in the middle with 2s and 3s.

**Figure 4.4:**

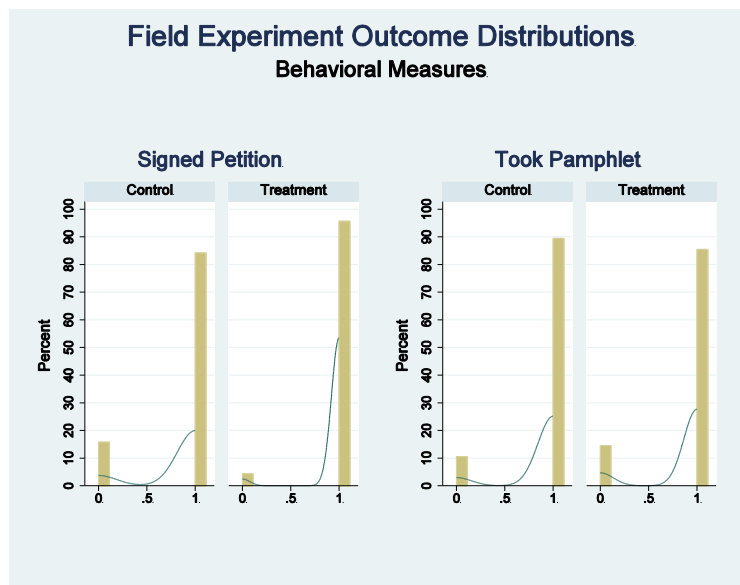


Beyond these mode differences, direct comparisons between the face-to-face treatment and control groups are very revealing. Relative to the subtle differences in the vignette experiment, the differences between the response distributions in the field experiment are visually striking. On every engagement indicator, the treatment group responses are stacked farther to the extremes than the control group. Values of 2 and 3 are quite rare in the treatment groups. The highest proportion for a value of 2 or 3 appears in the *Vote* indicator, where 16% of the treatment group stated a value

of 2. On the other hand, very high proportions are stacked at values of 1 and 4. Approximately 50% of the treatment groups selected a value of 4 for *Read* and a value of 1 for *Protest*. In similar fashion as the phone survey, contacting a politician is a very unpopular activity, where 68% of the control group and 77% of the treatment group selected values of 1.

Figure 4.5 shows the results for the two behavioral indicators: signing the petition against organized violence and taking a pamphlet of information about the issue. For both the treatment and control groups, very high proportions signed the petition and took the pamphlets. For the pamphlet indicator, the distributions are nearly identical with approximately 90% of each group accepting the offered informational pamphlet. The petition indicator shows some differences between groups; 10% more respondents in the treatment group signed the petition than the control group.

**Figure 4.5:**



Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show the differences in means between the treatment and control groups. Using the inverse-probability weights, selection into the treatment and control groups is

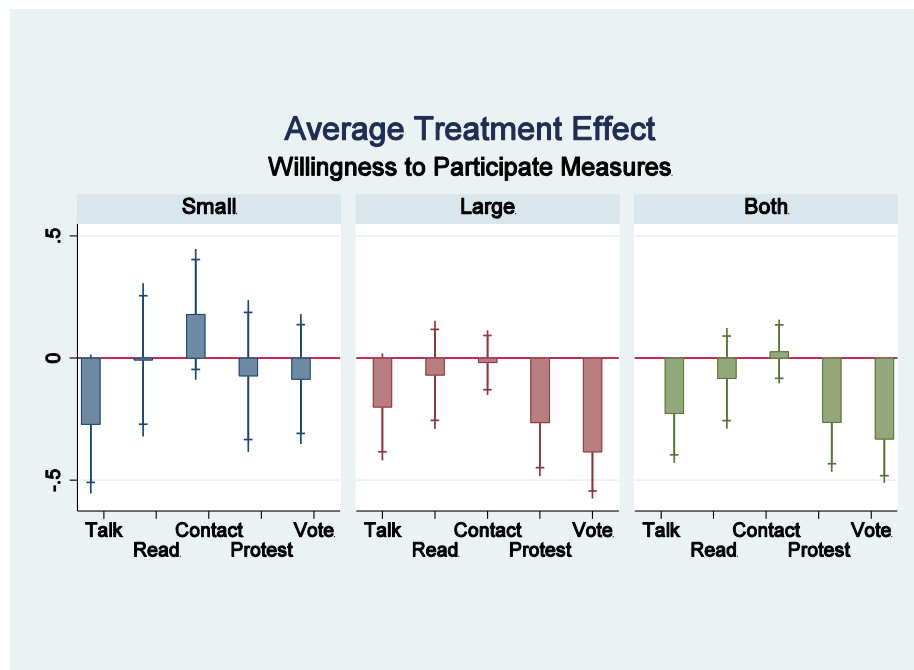
considered to be as-if-random, and differences between groups reflect the presence of a protest at the time of interview. For each of the models in Figure 4.6, the dependent variable is transformed as a dummy variable in which 0 stands for scores of 1 and 2 while 1 stands for scores of 3 and 4. The transformation creates consistency with the other direct effect models. The observational outcomes in Figure 4.7 are dichotomous in nature, where individuals either take the pamphlet/sign the petition or not. For both figures, the first panel compares the small protest to the control, the second panel compares the large protest to the control, and the last panel compares the presence of either protest to the control.

Figure 4.6 depicts fairly consistent, primarily negative, effects of the protest treatments. On average, exposure to protests in the field makes individuals *less* likely to talk about political issues, to join a protest, and vote for a sympathetic candidate. The impact on willingness to read about the issue is quite small and not significantly different from zero, and the effects on the willingness to contact a politician are ambiguous.

These effects are relatively consistent across treatment groups. The small protest has less clear effects with much wider confidence intervals. Indeed, the only indicator that achieves statistical significance (at the 90% level) is *Talk*. It is not immediately clear what contributed most to this outcome. The most obvious explanation is the smaller sample that arrived at the small protest follow-up, but it is also possible that the outcome is substantive. Perhaps smaller protests are less noticeable and only influence more deliberative forms of participation, leaving more costly participation somewhat ambiguous. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the point estimates for both protest treatments have the same sign for every indicator except *Contact*. Of course, it is difficult to draw conclusions about effects that do not achieve significance, but it is possible that smaller protests do not draw the same antagonism against elected politicians as larger protests.

The results from the large protest and the combination indicator are much easier to interpret. In the presence of a large protest, the average respondent feels less likely to engage in politics than he would in the absence of a protest. More specifically, the presence of a large protest made individuals 20% less likely to talk about the organized crime, 26% less likely to join a protest against organized crime, and 38% less likely to vote for a candidate because of his stance on violence.

**Figure 4.6:**

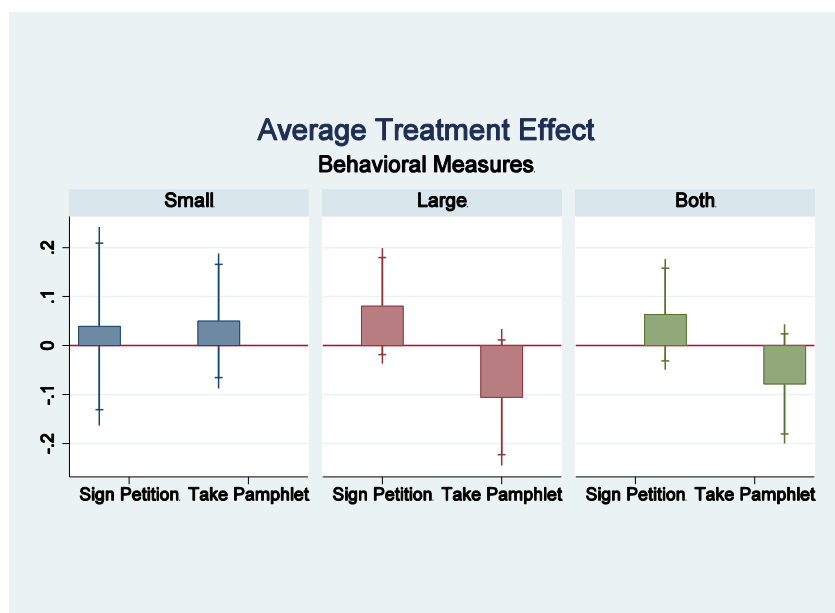


These findings are robust to different transformations of the dependent variables and different matching estimators. In Figure 4.4, it appeared that protest exposure made individuals more likely to report values on the extreme ends of the distribution. To push this hypothesis further, I coded the dependent variables in a variety of different ways - where 1 indicates only the lowest willingness to participate or the highest willingness to participate – but the differences in means

were consistent. I also ran the models using propensity score matching instead of using inverse probability weights, and the results remained consistent.

As is clear in Figure 4.7, the effects of protests on the behavioral measures of engagement were far less dramatic. There were no significant differences between treatment and control groups for either receiving the pamphlet or signing the petition. This is not surprising, given the distributions shown in Figure 4.5. Between 80% and 90% of respondents in all three groups took the pamphlet, and even more signed the petition. With such low variation, it was not likely that there would be differences between groups.

**Figure 4.7:**



The observable engagement indicators may have been particularly vulnerable to social desirability bias. According to interviewers at BGC Beltrán, many respondents at this stage began to discuss their hopes for an end to political and drug violence and their desire to help the victims. It is possible that the physical presence of an interviewer and a slightly more personalized item

applied extra pressure on the respondent to play the *Good Samaritan* or the political activist. Furthermore, the dichotomous nature of the item left little room for variation.

### **4.3 ROBUSTNESS TO SAMPLE SELECTION BIAS**

But do the starkly different findings in the two experiments necessarily indicate disparate responses to the protest treatments? Or might the divergent results be driven by the characteristics of the distinct samples? The vignette experiment benefits from a large random sample, and outcomes are observed for every respondent. The field experiment, on the other hand, represents a truncation of that sample in which outcomes are only observed among those who select into that sample.

Truncation alone is not necessarily problematic when the selection process is “ignorable,” or missing at random. That is not likely to be the case in this design. The type of respondent who is likely to attend a follow-up interview is expected to be systematically different from the type of respondent in the full sample who chooses not to attend. Although the experimental design and the inverse probability weights help to draw comparisons between the control- and treatment-group compliers in the field experiment, they do not control for the characteristics that make compliers different from non-compliers.

To test if the divergent effects of the field and vignette experiments are driven by selection bias, I analyze the field experiment using maximum likelihood selection models. These models incorporate information from the full sample to parametrically detect and correct for the selection bias of the field experiment (Heckman 1976, 1979; Greene 1981). The selection model follows a

two-step procedure. The first step estimates the regression equation on the outcome variable, and the second estimates selection into the sample. To put the model in context, this means that the two-equation procedure would estimate the type of person who is likely to arrive for the follow-up interview, and then the model uses that information to estimate the effect of the treatment on political engagement.

For the outcome model, I estimate the equation:

$$engagement_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 treatment_i + \mu_1$$

For this equation, *treatment* is an exogenous dummy variable that is equal to 1 when the respondent attends the small protest, the large protest, or either; it is equal to 0 when the respondent is in the control group. Of course, this equation can only be estimated among respondents who attended one of the events. In order to make inferences for the entire sample, I estimate the following selection equation:

$$\begin{aligned} attendance_i = & \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 male_i + \gamma_2 education_i + \gamma_3 items_i + \gamma_4 EPNapproval_i + \gamma_5 interest_i \\ & + \gamma_6 partisanship_i + \gamma_7 debator_i + \gamma_8 protester_i + \gamma_9 nprotests_i \\ & + \gamma_{10} victim_i + \mu_2 \end{aligned}$$

This model estimates the truncated outcome, attendance in the field experiment, using data gathered from the full sample during the phone survey. In Table 4.4, I demonstrate that this model captures important differences between compliers and non-compliers. The model shows that two variables positively predict attendance at a follow-up interview: interest in politics and willingness to debate contentious issues. This finding has face validity. It seems clear that attendance for a follow-up interview about political issues would be related to interest in politics and willingness



to discuss politics. It is interesting that the variables pertaining to general political issues were significant, and the specific issues of the protests under discussion were not.

**Table 4.4:**

<b>Self-Selection of Compliers</b>	
VARIABLES	(1) Attendance
Male	-0.090 (0.232)
Education	0.041 (0.065)
Items Index	0.026 (0.052)
EPN Approval	-0.096 (0.138)
Political Interest	0.325** (0.122)
Traditional Partisanship	0.494+ (0.252)
Debater	0.548* (0.249)
Protester	-0.270 (0.292)
Number of Protests	0.087 (0.097)
Victim	-0.095 (0.243)
Constant	-4.151*** (0.650)
Observations	1,114
Standard errors in parentheses	
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.10	

According to the postestimation classification table, this model predicts the correct outcome 71.9% of the time.<sup>21</sup> A comparison of observed-to-estimated attendance and observe-to-estimated non-attendance demonstrates that the model more effectively predicts negative

<sup>21</sup> This calculation is based on a classification table estimated with a cutoff threshold of 10% (approximately the rate of attendance).

outcomes (not attending an event) than it predicts positive attendance. Overall, the evidence suggests that there is likely some selection bias interfering with the field experiment treatment effects, and this model does a fair job of detecting that bias.

**Table 4.5:**

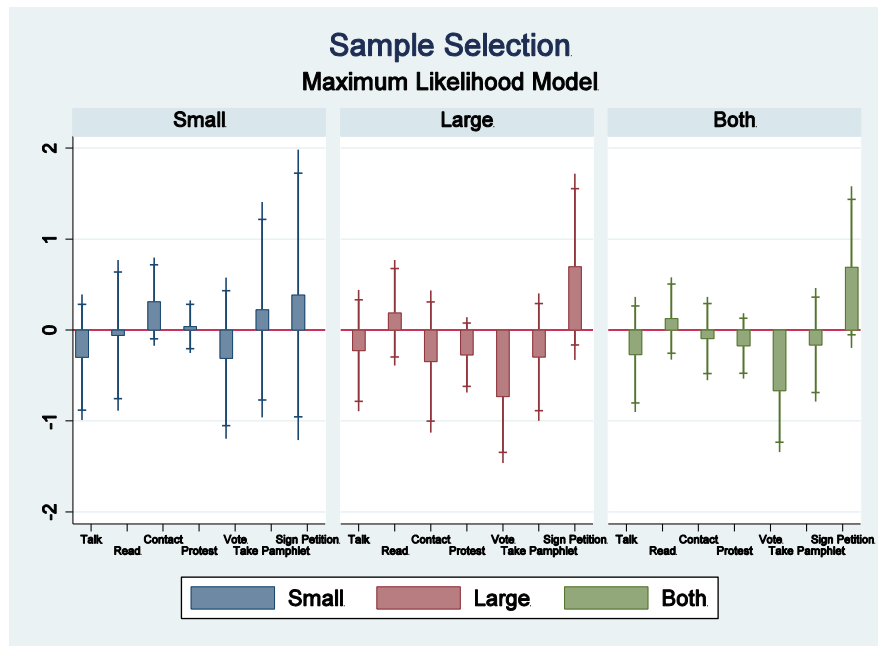
<b>Classification Table</b>			
<b>Classified</b>	<b>Observed Attendance</b>	<b>Observed Non-Attendance</b>	<b>Total</b>
Estimated Attendance	40	266	306
Estimated Non-Attendance	47	761	808
<i>Correctly classified: 71.90%</i>			

Before reporting the results of the two-equation selection model, a brief speculation about the characteristics of compliers can shed light on the effects of the field treatment. Compliers of the field experiment were more interested in politics and more willing to engage in contentious discussion than non-compliers. Intuitively, these individuals would be *least* likely to respond negatively to the protest experience. Should the entire sample from the phone survey have complied with the field experiment, it seems unlikely that the treatment effects would be positive, as they were in the vignette experiment.

Next, I use the selection equation from Table 4.4 to correct for sample selection bias in the treatment effects of the field experiment. The results of these models are depicted in Figure 4.8. The figure includes all of the engagement indicators, the reported willingness measures followed by the behavioral indicators. There are few statistically significant findings emerging from these

models; only willingness to vote passes the threshold to significance. The wide confidence intervals are not surprising, given the small sample size for the outcome equation.<sup>22</sup>

**Figure 4.8:**



Despite the lack of significance, there are meaningful implications to draw from Figure 4.8. While the wide confidence intervals make it impractical to draw conclusions about the effects of the field experiment, the selection models help to rule out some of the more problematic alternative hypotheses. Specifically, it appears unlikely that the negative direction of the field experiment's treatment effects was simply a function of the truncated sample. Controlling for the differences between compliers and non-compliers, the treatment effects in the selection models still imitate the average treatment effects of the field experiment quite closely. In fact, the coefficients of the treatment effects are much greater in magnitude, weakly suggesting that the full sample (consisting of compliers and non-compliers) might have actually responded more strongly

<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting that the estimates for *Contact* are potentially unstable. For these models, the repeated rho ranges from -1 to 1.

to the treatment than did the compliers only. Considering the differences between compliers and non-compliers, this finding would not seem out of place. If the sample were not truncated to the most political interested and contentious respondents, protests may have even stronger negative effects on political engagement. The evidence, while inconclusive, suggests that the positive treatment effects in the vignette experiment and negative effects in the field experiments are not simply a function of the non-random compliance.

#### **4.4 HETEROGENEOUS EFFECTS OF PROTEST SUPPORT**

Will protests have uniform effects across the population? Or might protest exposure increase political engagement among some people more than others? In this section, I will examine the heterogeneous effects of the protest treatments, focusing particularly on the vignette experiment. I focus on the vignette experiment for practical and theoretical reasons. In practical terms, it would be methodologically infeasible to estimate heterogeneous effects for the field experiment, which is limited to 88 respondents and requires statistical weighting to balance treatment and control groups.

In addition to this methodological caveat, there are more theoretical reasons to emphasize the vignette experiment. According to well-established research in political communication, the media focus of the vignette experiment is a highly appropriate context to examine heterogeneous audience effects. This literature has long found that the effects of media messages depend on the characteristics of the viewer (Klapper 1960). Klapper's classic meta-analysis concludes that the media might *appear* to have a minimally persuasive impact, in large part, because it operates "more frequently as an agent of reinforcement than as an agent of change" (p. 15). Viewers who already

agree the message are more likely to be impacted by the media content, whereas viewers who do not already agree are less impressionable (Holbert, Garrett and Gleason 2010). These effects are perpetuated because individuals actively choose to follow media that conforms to their opinions (Prior 2007; Arceneaux and Johnson 2013) and because they dismiss opposing viewpoints when forced to encounter them (Taber and Lodge 2006). Given this extant research, it is fitting to ask whether protests reported in the media face similar constraints as other political information.

The key characteristic that conditions the effect of media messages is the viewer's prior support of the message (Klapper 1960). Individuals who support the protest are likely to respond positively to the message, and individuals who do *not* support the protest are either less likely to exhibit any effects, or they may even respond negatively. For the protests selected in this dissertation, it is not reasonable to expect respondents to explicitly state opposition the protest message; few respondents would condemn protests that demand peace from organized crime. However, many respondents may condemn the implicit message of the protests, which suggested that Enrique Peña Nieto and the political establishment were responsible for the students' disappearances. Thus, I operationalize protest support through variables that capture support for President Peña Nieto and the traditional political parties. Additionally, though I expect few respondents would oppose the message of the protest, some observers may be more receptive than others. Specifically, I expect that respondents who have personally suffered from political violence, or who know someone else who has suffered, may be more significantly impacted by the protest than their counterparts.

First, I will discuss the conditional effects of presidential approval. For these models, presidential approval was transformed as a dummy variable, where 0 represents those who disapprove and strongly disapprove of Peña Nieto's work in office and 1 represents those who

approve and strongly approve. Figure 4.9 reports the heterogeneous effects of this variable on the engagement indicators. I ran separate models for each dependent variable and at each level of the moderating variable. To maintain consistency between all of the heterogeneous effect models, these models do not control for other covariates beyond the moderators and each of the four treatments.

**Figure 4.9:**

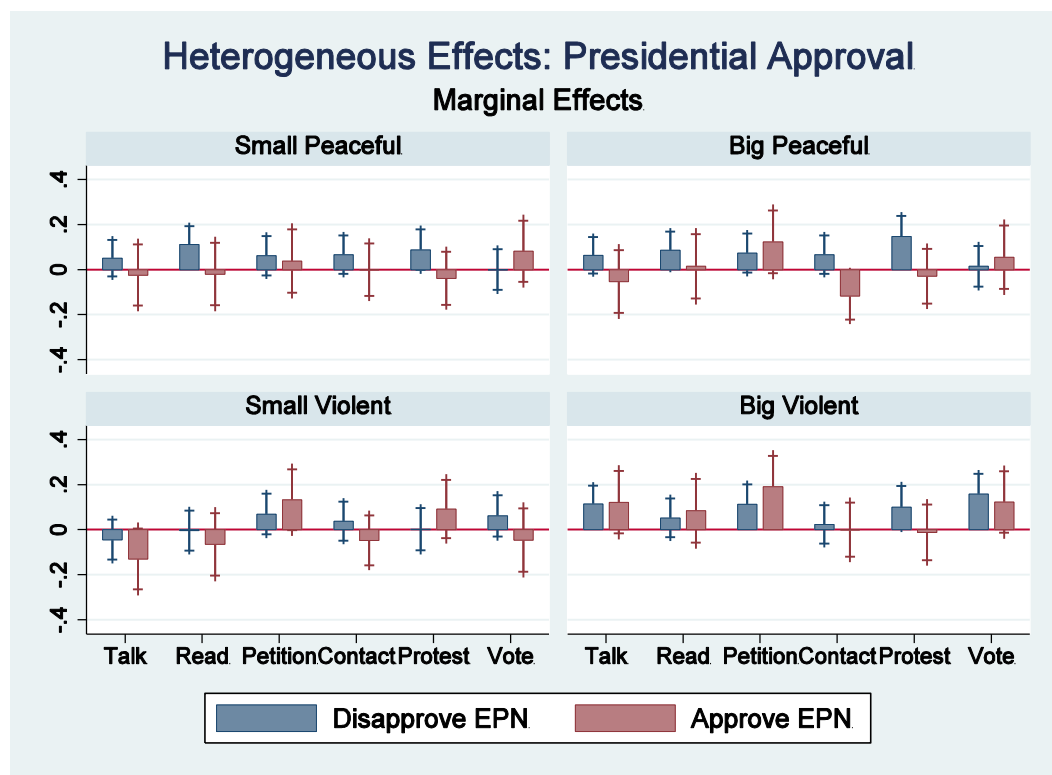


Figure 4.9 provides some evidence for the reinforcing effects of the protests. As the figure indicates, many of the models that showed significant, positive effects of protests are only significant for those who disapprove of Peña Nieto. That is, the individuals who demonstrated positive treatment effects in the previous models are the individuals who are most receptive to protests critical of the president. Relative to the control group, the Peña Nieto disapprovers who are treated with the small, peaceful protest and the big, peaceful protest vignettes more likely to

read about and join a protest about political violence, but these effects do not carry over to respondents who approve of the president.<sup>23</sup> There are also some significant differences for the large, violent protest vignette. For this treatment, the positive effects on *Talk* and *Protest* (at the 90% level) are only significant among those who disapprove of Peña Nieto. The large, violent protest treatment has a stronger significant effect on *Vote* for those who disapprove of the president.

At the same time, those who express approval of Peña Nieto experience some negative effects of the protest treatments. These individuals are less likely to contact politicians in response to the large, peaceful protest and less likely (at the 90% level) to talk about political violence in response to the small, violent protest vignette. Indeed, the only effect that runs counter to the media reinforcement hypothesis is the effect of the small, violent protest on *Petition*. At the 90% level, this positive effect is only significant among Peña Nieto supporters.

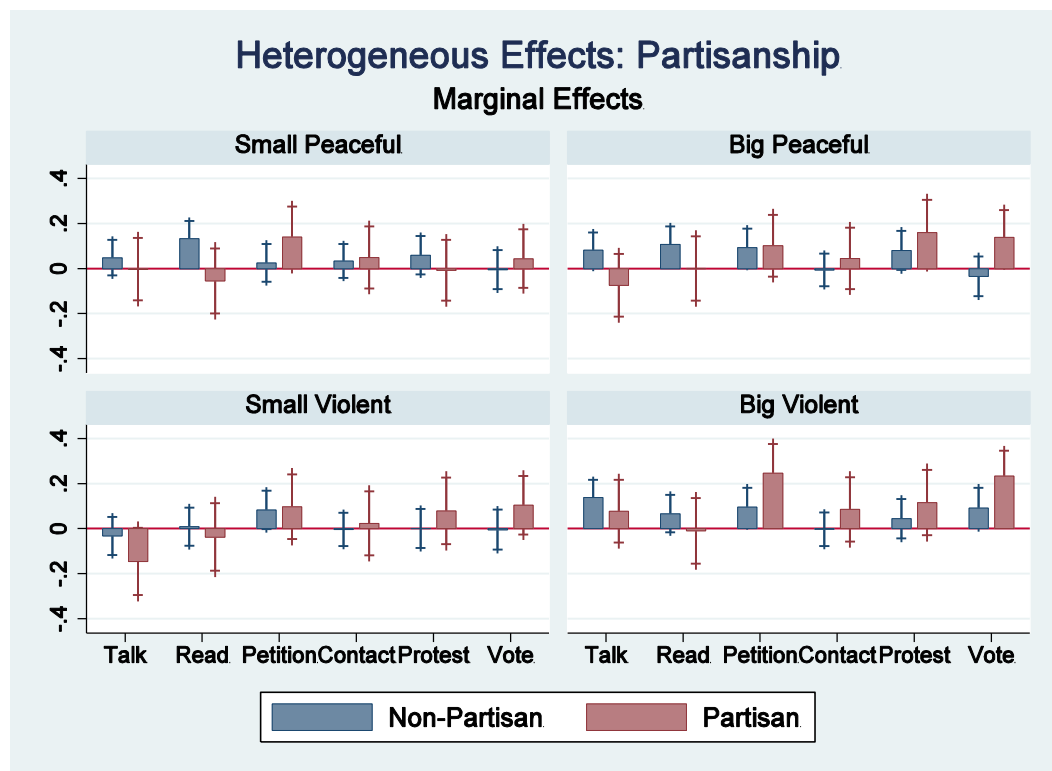
Figure 4.10 shows that the conditional effects of partisanship are less clear than those of presidential approval. Because the protests generally cast blame upon all of the Mexican political establishment, I expected that the positive effects of protests would be strongest respondents who reject the traditional political parties (PRI, PAN, and PRD). This is true for a number of models, but there are a number of cases in which the positive effects of the protest treatments are stronger or are only significant among traditional partisans. For example, the positive effect of the big, peaceful protest on *Vote* is only significant for partisans, as is the effect of the small, peaceful protest vignette on *Petition* (at the 90% level). Similarly, the *Big/Violent* has significantly greater marginal effects among partisans on the willingness to petition and vote. It is possible that the

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<sup>23</sup> The small, peaceful protest only has a significant effect on *Read* at the 90% level. The same is true for the effect of the large, peaceful protest on *Protest*.

heterogeneous effects would be more consistent if they were conditioned on PRI support, rather than support for any of the three traditional parties. However, the low proportion of PRI-istas in the sample (around 10%) prevents me from estimating these effects with any precision.

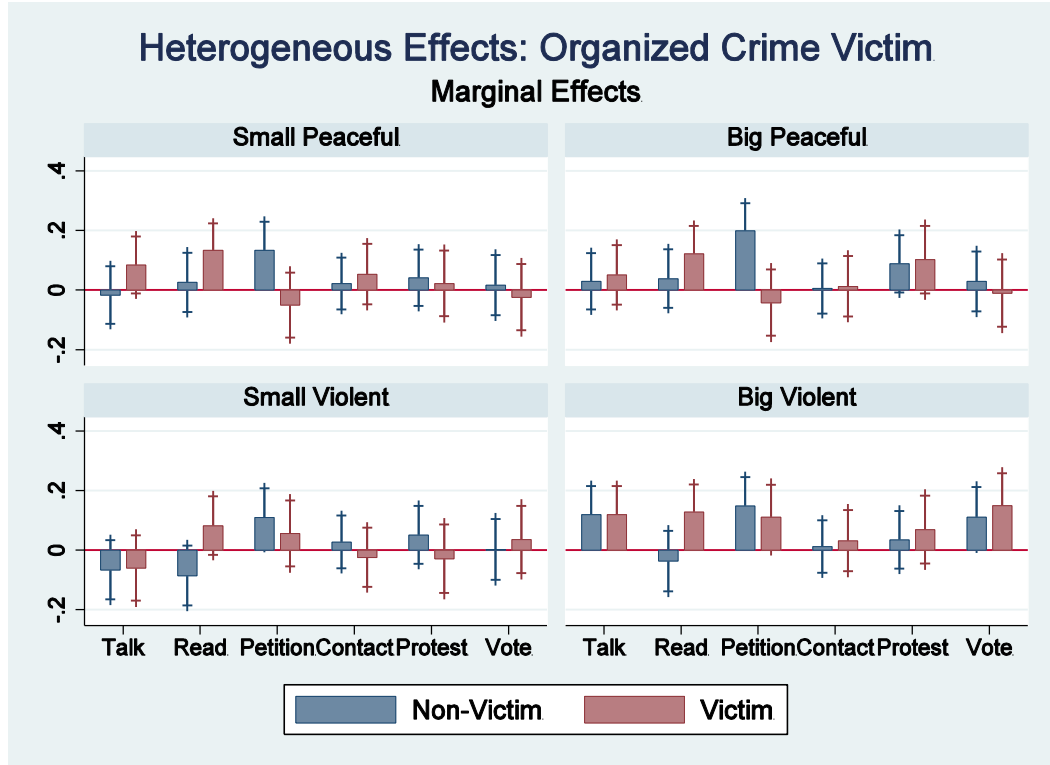
**Figure 4.10:**



The conditional effects by crime victimization are even less clear. As I show in Figure 4.11, many effects are only significant for organized crime victims, but at the same time, several effects are restricted to non-victims. For example, the effect on *Petition* is only significant among non-victims. This effect is relatively consistent across the protest treatments. The effects of both peaceful protest treatments and the small, violent treatment are *only* statistically significant among non-victims, and the effect of the large, violent protest is only significant at the 90% level among victims.



Figure 4.11:



In summary, there is some evidence for the heterogeneity of protest effects. Research in political communication finds heterogeneous constraints on the media's ability to influence viewers. Scholars do not find that *any* individual can be persuaded by the messages they encounter in the media. But rather, the persuasive influence of the media is generally limited to those individuals who were already supportive of the message. When I examined the conditional effects of the vignette experiment, I found some evidence that protest reports face similar constraints as other persuasive messages in the media. This is particularly true when support for the protest is operationalized as disapproval for the sitting president. Those who disapprove of President Peña Nieto are consistently more likely to increase in their willingness to engage as a response to the protest treatments, and those who approve of the president sometimes react negatively to the treatments. Meanwhile, other operationalizations of protest support – such as rejection of the

traditional parties or organized crime victimization – do not result in such predictable outcomes. In spite of the theoretical expectations, many of the positive effects of the protest treatments are targeted among partisans and non-victims.

## 4.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Both experimental designs yielded effects of protest exposure on political engagement, but the direction of the effects is dramatically and consistently different for the two experiments. On the one hand, the vignette treatments generally resulted in increased engagement. While some treatments are more robust to model specification than others, the positive direction of the effect is fairly consistent throughout the treatments. On the other hand, the field treatments resulted in political disengagement over a wide range of indicators. Again, this effect was more pronounced for the large protest treatment than the small protest, but the direction of the effect is consistent. Moreover, the direction of the effect remained consistent *even when adjusting the selection into the field experiment*. An examination of the heterogeneous effects suggests a more nuanced argument. I find that the treatment effects – at least in the vignette experiment – are strongest and most consistent among those respondents who disapprove of the sitting president. Meanwhile, other indicators revealed less substantial findings about the moderating effects of protest support.

The apparent divergence in treatment effects has substantive and methodological implications. Substantively, this is preliminary evidence that 1) protest do influence public engagement, 2) the effect can be positive or negative, and 3) the way in which respondents encounter a protest is more determinant of their reaction than the actual characteristics of the protest they observe. Of course, further analysis is necessary to assess the mechanisms and validity

behind these effects, but the basic findings in this chapter represent a substantial contribution to the literature on protest consequences. Methodologically, the key take-away point is that *neither* experiment would have captured these effects in isolation. The causal relationship takes form through the combination of the field and survey experiments. This suggests that experimental designs may need to conjoin multiple forms of treatments in order to fully explain complex social processes.

In addition to these general implications, there are some more specific conclusions to notice. First, some engagement indicators are more likely to be affected than others. Two indicators – the willingness to talk about political issues and the willingness to vote - are highly susceptible to protest influence. These two variables show effects for both types of experiments and for multiple treatment arms. In the vignette experiment, some protests influenced individuals' willingness to sign a petition, but when individuals were actually given the opportunity to sign a petition in the field experiment there were no differences between treatment and control groups.

Second, there is a fundamental difference between the two experiments that does not necessarily influence the findings but draws attention to the difference between survey modes: social desirability bias. In particular, social desirability bias was extremely strong in the field experiment, compared to the vignette experiment. Figures 4.1 and 4.4 displayed the distributions of the engagement indicators for all treatment groups relative to the control groups. Comparing the control groups to treatment groups, it was immediately obvious that the field experiment resulted in more visual differences in the post-treatment distributions than the vignette experiment. It is also noteworthy that the control groups differ enormously between the two experiments. Over the phone, control group respondents were far more willing to report the minimum levels of engagement, but this was far less common in the face-to-face interviews. Control respondents in

the field experiment were also far more likely to report maximum levels of engagement. Additional evidence of rampant social desirability bias was found in the behavioral measures of engagement. Over the phone, signing a petition was not a very popular activity. However, in the presence of an interviewer, nearly every respondent in the field experiment signed the petition. The between-subject design prevents the mode differences from contaminating results, but it is worth questioning whether face-to-face interviews should be the gold-standard for survey implementation.

## 5.0 MEDIATING CAUSAL MECHANISMS

Empirical evidence from preceding chapters has found support for the behavioral effects of protests, but the direction of the effect is highly contingent on form of exposure. What explains these highly divergent results? The key to this answer may depend on a more fundamental question: *how* does protest exposure influence engagement? What is the causal mechanism? Does this mechanism also depend on the type of exposure?

In this chapter, I will attempt to demonstrate *why* exposure to protest activity might drive changes in political behavior. Which causal mechanism – emotions, conflict aversion, or political efficacy – best explains the causal effect of protests on political engagement? I will use causal mediation analysis to estimate the role of intermediary variables that transmit the effect of protests to subsequent engagement (Baron and Kenny 1986). I will use the technique proposed by Imai et al. (2011) to understand the causal chain between protests and engagement through a potential outcomes framework.

I designed the survey instrument to dig beneath the direct effects and shed light on the mechanisms through which protests can drive engagement. After exposing respondents to each treatment (both in the phone survey and the field experiment) but before measuring the engagement outcomes, I included items to assess the individual mediators. Just as the causal process progresses from treatment to mediator to outcome, the survey measures each of these phases sequentially. The analysis of these causal mechanisms will also occur sequentially: first, I will identify the effects of the treatments on the mediators, and then I will test how the effects are transferred to the

outcome variables. I will also test for the possibility that some mechanisms, specifically conflict aversion, can be treated as moderators *and* mediators.

## **5.1 FROM PROTESTS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDIATORS**

I begin by discussing how protests affected each of the potential mediators. Before going through the results, it is important to refer back to the mediation theories. These theories will be useful to interpret the models that follow. Some theories – namely, conflict seeking – are indicators for bipolar concepts. This means that high scores on these indicators have a different interpretation than low scores. The conflict variable ranges from avoiding to seeking political conflict, and the theories anticipate very different outcomes for the high scorers and the low scorers. The theories other mediators – emotions and efficacy – are unipolar. The theories suggest that emotions and efficacy, when triggered, will affect engagement. A rating on the low end of these scales indicates a low trigger, rather than a distinct concept. While it might have been possible to conceptualize positive and negative emotions along the same dimension, most literature suggests that the individual emotions are uniquely important and conceptually distinct from one another.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the effects of the experimental treatments on each of the mediators. The models are estimated in the same way as described in the previous chapter, with the exception of two points. The main difference is the change in outcome from engagement indicators to mediator indicators. They are organized by the theoretical groupings discussed earlier in this chapter: emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy. The second difference is that I chose to run linear models, rather than binary logistic regressions, for the vignette treatments. Theoretically, the cutpoints for the psychological mediators are less clear-cut than those for

engagement. Methodologically, it is more efficient to model the mediators linearly for the subsequent analysis of the causal mechanisms (Imai, Keele, and Tingley 2010).

**Figure 5.1:**

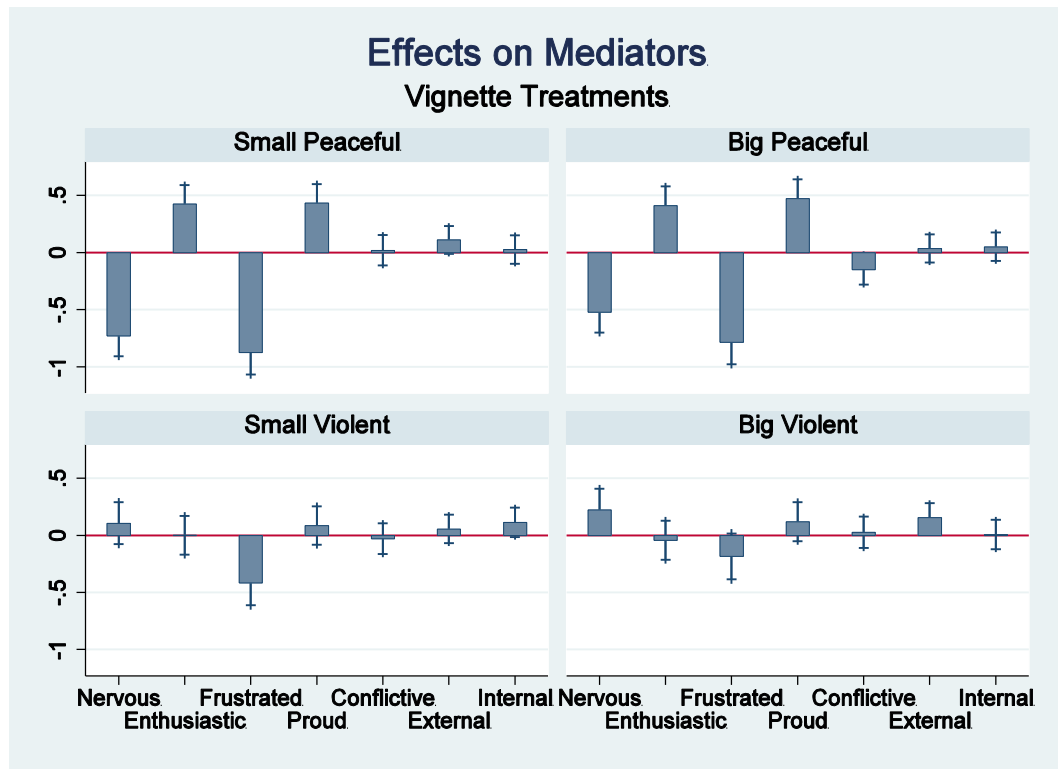


Figure 5.2:

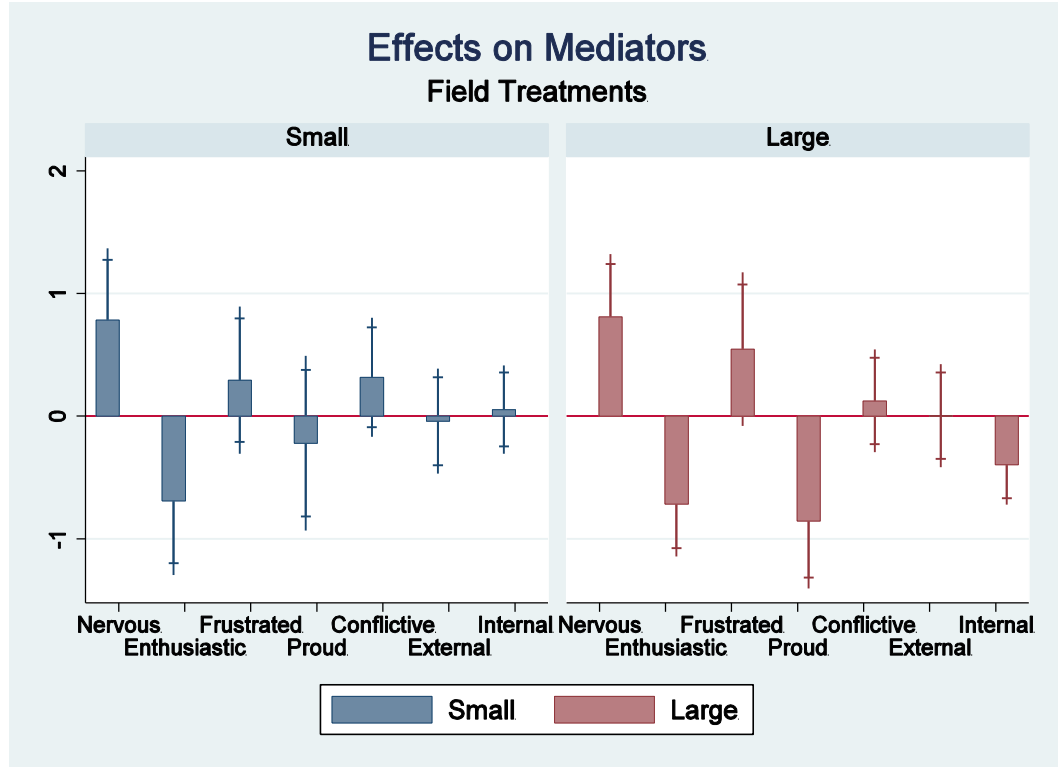


Figure 5.1 shows the effects of the vignette treatments on each of the mediators, and Figure 5.2 shows the corresponding results for the field treatment. There are interesting similarities and differences. For both figures, the treatments impact the emotion mediators with far greater magnitude than the other mediators. These include both positive emotions (enthusiasm and pride) and negative emotions (anxiety and frustration). For both positive and negative emotions, the protest treatments have consistently significant effects at the 95% level, and these are of much greater magnitude than the other mediators. For the vignette experiment, Figure 5.1 suggests that hearing about protests can have powerful emotional consequences. While there are some exceptions, peaceful protests tend to increase positive emotions and decrease negative emotions, and violent protests result in the opposite effects. Peaceful protests are more likely to influence the full range of emotions than violent protests. Regardless of the number of protesters, exposure to a



peaceful protest can make individuals feel less nervous and less frustrated and more enthusiastic and more proud. Hearing about a peaceful protest can reduce nervousness by .73 (nearly an entire point) when the protest is small and by .52 when the protest is large. These protests are even more effective at reducing frustration; small, peaceful protests decrease frustration by .87 while large, peaceful protests reduce frustration by .78. By somewhat lesser degrees, they also increase positive emotions. Both types of peaceful protests increase enthusiasm by approximately .42; small and large peaceful protests increase pride by .44 and .47 respectively. Overall, hearing about these protests secondhand can inspire a host of positive emotions and actually reduce negative emotions.

The violent protest vignettes showed somewhat less consistent effects on the emotion mediators. Neither treatment for violent protests has a significant effect – either positive or negative – on the positive emotions of pride or enthusiasm. The treatment for a large, violent protest results in an increase of .22 in nervousness. Interestingly, the small, violent protest had no significant effect on nervousness but resulted in a *decrease* of .42 in frustration.

These findings are essentially reversed in the field experiment. Even though both protests in the field were peaceful, respondents did not respond to them in the same ways as they did the positive protests in the vignette experiment. Rather, both field treatments lowered positive emotions and increased negative emotions, relative to the control. The directions of these effects are the same for both treatments, although the confidence intervals cross zero for frustration and pride in the small protest. As I suggested in the discussion of direct effects, this is likely due to the much smaller sample size. The emotional effects of the large protest are quite dramatic. Relative to the control group (whose mean level of nervousness was 1.93 on a scale of 1-4), respondents who conducted the follow-up interview in the presence of the large protest reported an increase of .81 in nervousness. This substantial increase leads the average level of nervousness in the treatment

group to be quite close to the maximum. Significant at the 90% level, there were also substantial increases in levels of frustration. The mean frustration level of the control group was 1.75, and exposure to the large protest increased frustration by .55. This is an interesting finding because not a single treatment in the vignette experiment significantly increased frustration; all of the treatment effects were in the negative direction.

The large protest yielded even stronger effects for the positive emotion mediators. Even though all of the vignette treatments resulted in increased levels of positive emotions, the real protests resulted in substantial decreases of enthusiasm and pride. Exposure to the large protest decreased enthusiasm by .72 and pride by .86. The control group means for these emotions were fairly high (2.87 and 3.17 respectively) so exposure to the protest brought these positive emotions much closer to the mid-range of the scale. The small protest significantly decreased enthusiasm by .69, but the negative effect on pride was not statistically significant.

Effects for the other mediators were all of lesser magnitude than for the emotion mediators. Conflict seeking was not significantly increased or decreased with exposure to most of the vignette or field treatments. Of all of the treatments, only the large, peaceful protest vignette resulted in any significant differences from the control group. Somewhat unexpectedly, exposure to this stimulus decreased the respondents' willingness to debate the issue by .15. Although most of the literature suggests that individuals would become more conflict averse in response to a highly conflictive stimulus, this particular vignette is perhaps the least conflictive of all treatments. It was administered during the phone survey, so respondents were not physically confronted with or inconvenienced by the treatment, and the vignette itself reports a protest that is non-violent.

The final set of mediators refers to political efficacy, both internal and external. Internal efficacy, or the respondent's perceived ability to understand politics, is significantly driven by the large, real protest treatment. This protest treatment made individuals less likely .39 units less likely to feel that they understood political affairs in Mexico. None of vignette treatments significantly increased or decreased internal efficacy, although the directions of the effects are generally positive. The index for external efficacy was not significantly moved by any treatment, and the coefficients for each model are nearly too minimal to declare any direction.

It is possible that the effects for external efficacy are so uncertain because the item was constructed as an index. To delve deeper into this possibility, I have examined the effects of the protest treatments on the individual efficacy indicators. These results, shown in Figures 5.3 and 5.4, are somewhat sporadic. The specific indicators ask the respondents if 1) *people like me have a voice in political discussions in Mexico*, 2) *the groups protesting organized violence are capable of changing things in Mexico for better or worse*, 3) *social movements generally have a powerful voice that can influence Mexican politics*, and 4) *politicians in Mexico care about what the public thinks*. Not one of these indicators appears to have a particularly consistent effect across treatments, and most of them remain insignificant. Two opposite vignettes – the small, peaceful protest and the large, violent protest increased the perception that these groups could deliver political changes. The large, violent protest also increased respondents' perception they people like them had a powerful voice. Meanwhile, neither of the field treatments resulted in a significant change for any of the indicators. These somewhat inconsistent and relatively low effects suggest that the minimal effects of the index were not due to the inappropriate aggregation of items, but rather to the limited capacity of protests to drive external efficacy.

Figure 5.3:

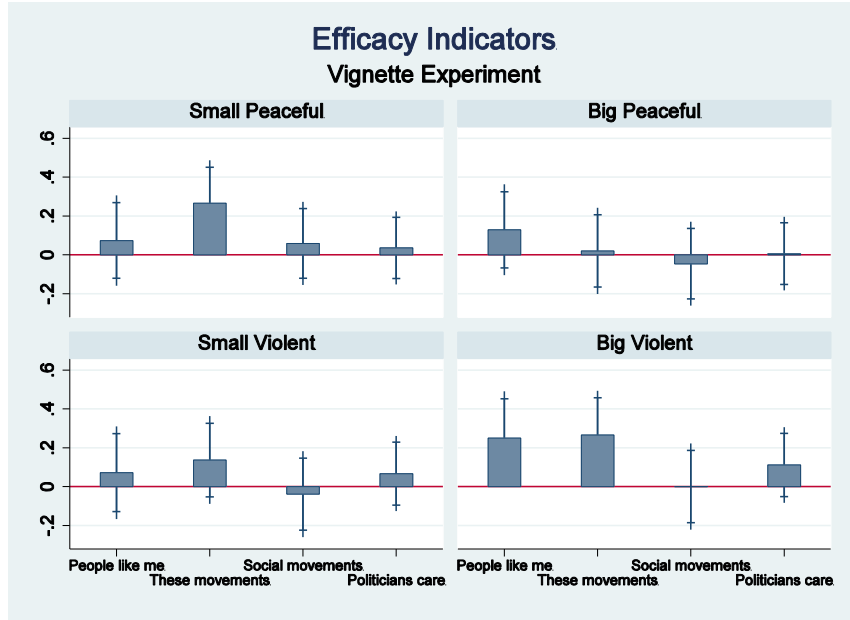
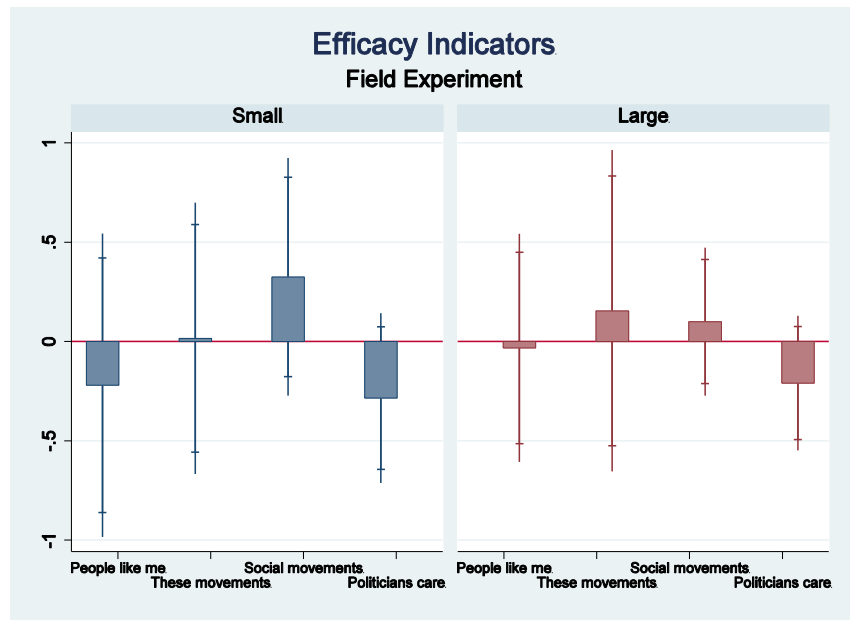


Figure 5.4:



At this stage, there is supportive evidence for some of the hypotheses specified in Chapter 2. Some of those hypotheses were conditional on protest characteristics and can be confirmed or rejected by comparing the effects of different treatments. *Mechanism Hypothesis 5* on conflictive

protests and conflict aversion, was not confirmed. Most protest treatments did not make respondents less likely to seek conflict, but the one treatment with this result was decidedly not the most conflictive. The only treatment to increase conflict aversion was the *Big/Peaceful* treatment in the vignette experiment. While this treatment might be considered conflictive for its size, the ideal confirmation of this hypothesis would be treatment effects among the violent protests. I also found oddly contradictory evidence to reject *Mechanism Hypothesis 8* about large protests and political efficacy. According to threshold models, large protests are most likely to increase political efficacy, but two out of the three positive significant effects in the vignette experiment were for the *Small* protest treatments. Also, the large protest in the field experiment actually decreased internal efficacy.

## 5.2 FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDIATORS TO ENGAGEMENT

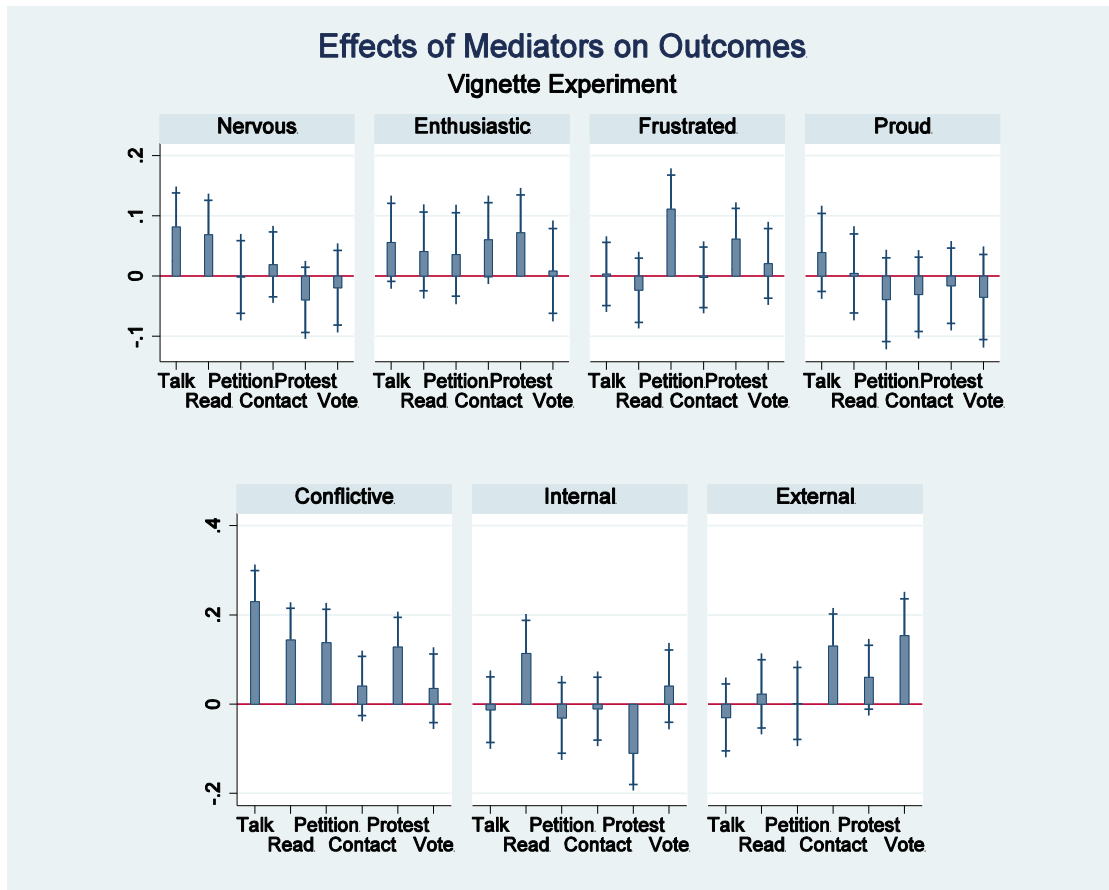
Next, I estimate the effect of each mediator on political engagement. Each model is estimated using continuous DV and includes the complete set of mediators, the treatments, and the full list of controls. The list of controls is even more important when estimating the effect of the mediator,  $M$ , on the outcome,  $Y$ , than they are when estimating the effects of the treatments because the mediators were observed. While the treatments are randomly assigned to mitigate the influence of confounders, the values of the mediators are dependent on the values of the treatments and pre-treatment confounders. The covariates improve the model by controlling for the non-random selection into the values of  $M$ .

Given the long list of covariates for each model (including all mediators, all treatments, and all controls), I summarize the results by only reporting the effects of the mediators. These

results appear in Figure 5.5 for the vignette experiment and Figure 5.6 for the field experiment. A number of observations are immediately clear from these two figures. First, the mediators do not have a great deal of explanatory power for the engagement outcomes. The direct effects of the protests were far stronger than the effects of the psychological mediators. Second, the confidence intervals for the field experiment are far too wide to draw many conclusions; not a single mediator has a significant effect on any of the engagement indicators. This is likely a result of the small sample size and the limited degrees of freedom. Indeed, because the key variables of interest (the mediators) are not randomized, it is very easy for effects to wash out. Third, although the effects are not significant, it is noteworthy that the directions of the mediator effects are largely consistent between the two experiments. This is particularly interesting because the two experiments have shown reversed directions for practically all other models. That is, I found that protests have opposite effects on engagement and opposite effects on the intervening mediators, but the mediators themselves have similar effects on engagement. This suggests that the cause of the diverging effects is actually the type of exposure to protest, rather than the survey mode or the timing of the interview.

I will now take some time to look at the two experiments individually, beginning with the vignette experiment, and discuss the results of the mediators. Most of the effects are small compared to those of the protest treatments. Most of the effects sizes are lower than 0.1, and the highest effect size (in conflict seeking) only reaches 0.2. This indicates that - once one controls for the possible confounders for emotions, perceptions of efficacy, etc. - each unit increase in a psychological mediator is not likely to make political engagement much more likely.

Figure 5.5:



Despite the small magnitude of effects, Figures 5.5 and 5.6 reveal meaningful information on the determinants of different forms of engagement. The negative emotions of nervousness and frustration operate quite differently. Nervousness behaves very much as AIT would predict; an increase in nervousness makes an individual more likely to seek out information but not immediately more likely to take action (*Mechanism Hypothesis 2*). In this case, individuals who experienced nervous feelings were more likely to want to talk about or read about the issue, but they did not report higher willingness for more participatory forms of engagement. Frustration, on the other hand, does not resemble a typical negative emotion. In this case, frustration increases the

individual's likelihood of non-institutionalized participation such as petitioning and protesting. Frustration, it seems, represents exasperation with the political system and translates into increased activism; it is not necessarily a manifestation of AIT's surveillance system.

While it was expected that positive emotions would increase participation among a host of indicators, they seem to have very limited effects (*Mechanism Hypothesis 1*). While enthusiasm results in positive effects for all of the indicators, most of the confidence intervals cross zero. At the 90% level, there are slight increases in willingness to talk about politics and willingness to protest. On the other hand, pride has no significant effects, and the directions are far less consistent. Willingness to participate in deliberative forms of engagement (i.e., talking about and reading about politics) increases, but willingness to participate more actively decreases. Nevertheless, it is important not to dismiss the AIT's expectations for pride as a positive emotion. After all, these effects are not significantly different from zero.

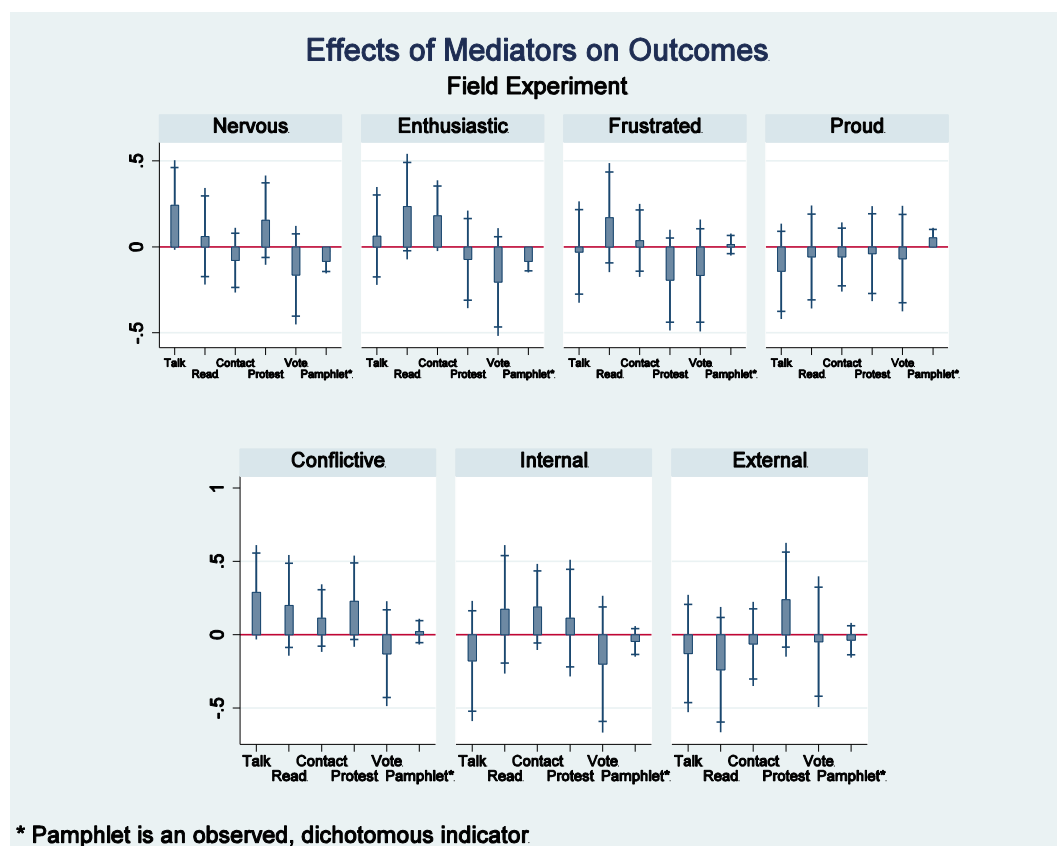
Relative to the other mediators, a desire to avoid conflict has the most powerful, negative impact on engagement, particularly deliberative engagement and non-institutional engagement (*Mechanism Hypothesis 6*). Considering the bipolar nature of this indicator, these findings are consistent with theoretical expectation. The theory was derived in terms of conflict aversion and stated that an aversion of conflict would lead to disengagement. However, because this particular indicator is coded such that high values indicate conflict seeking and low values represent conflict aversion, one would need to conceptualize the reverse-coding to test the conflict aversion theory. With this in mind, independent of treatments and confounders, a one-unit increase in conflict-aversion would result in a .21 decrease in willingness to talk about organized crime, a .12 decrease in willingness to read about the issue, a .10 decrease in willingness to sign a petition against



organized crime, and a .09 decrease in willingness to protest. No other mediator has such strong effects on the outcomes.

Finally, political efficacy is the most irregular of the mediators. While theory would predict that political efficacy would make individuals more likely to engage in any way, these results suggest otherwise (*Mechanism Hypothesis 7*). Internal and external efficacy hardly appear to be related concepts at all. An individual's perception that he understands politics quite predictably makes him more likely to read, but is also makes him less like to protest. An individual's perception that he can influence politics makes him more likely to contact politicians and more likely to vote, but the other forms of engagement are not significantly impacted by the protest treatments.

**Figure 5.6:**



As is shown in Figure 5.6, the field experiment simply did not have enough power to identify causal effects of purely observational (non-randomized) independent variables. Not only do nearly all of the confidence intervals cross over zero, but most of them are very wide. Most of them indicate a range of uncertainty as wider than a half point, and some of them extend from -0.5 to 0.5. A few select variables approach statistical significance, such as the positive effect of nervousness on talking and the positive effect of group identification on protest. Moreover, as I alluded to earlier in this section, we can observe that many of the directions are consistent with the vignette experiment and – consequently – with the theoretical expectations. Beyond these points, there are practically no inferences we can draw from the effect of mediators in the field experiment.

The one exception pertains to the observational indicator for engagement: taking the pamphlet about the protest group. Unlike the other engagement indicators, *Pamphlet* was modeled as a binary logit. Its counterpart, for signing the petition, was also modeled this way, but there was insufficient variation in the dependent variable. The mediation mechanisms for taking the pamphlet are somewhat inconsistent with the theoretical explanations. Pride – as a positive emotion – increases the likelihood of taking a pamphlet. However, the effects are negative for nervousness and enthusiasm. This finding runs counter to Affective Intelligence Theory, which argues that both of these emotions would result in engagement. Enthusiasm was expected to increase engagement across all indicators, and nervousness was to increase information-seeking. Taking a pamphlet about the protest group, therefore, should have increased as a response to both emotional triggers.

### 5.3 ESTIMATING THE CAUSAL MECHANISMS

Now that I have estimated the effect of protests on each mediator and the effect of each mediator on engagement, I will demonstrate how these two components form a causal chain. For each treatment and each mediator, I will estimate the *average causal mediation effect* (ACME), or the indirect effect by which the treatment influences the outcome through the mediator. This quantity of interest is estimated through two equations, one where the treatment and confounders drive the mediator and one where the treatment, confounders, and mediator drive the outcome. Critical for the estimation of the ACME is the *sequential ignorability assumption*, which states that the causal effects for both equations are statistically independent of pretreatment confounders. This is simply enough for the first equation, where treatment is randomly assigned. However, the psychological mediators for this study were observed after the treatment and before the outcome; they were not randomly assigned or manipulated. In order for the sequential ignorability assumption to hold, I included the complete set of control variables for both so that the mediator might be considered to be *as-if random* and independent of confounders (Imai, Keele, and Yamamoto 2010; Imai et al. 2011).<sup>24</sup>

I also included probability weights for the field experiment so that the treatment is *as-if random*. The assumption in these models is that the treatment is randomized or that the full set of covariates for the two equations will adequately balance the treatments and mediators. However, the non-random noncompliance for the control and treatment groups in the field experiment requires additional measures. To adjust for the added confoundedness, I weighted these models by the inverse probability of having received treatment. These probabilities could not include the

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<sup>24</sup> Pooled ACMEs were estimated using the Hicks and Tingley (2011) Mediation package, which translates Imai et al.'s (2011) R Mediation package to STATA.

same list of covariates that I used to predict treatment in Chapter 3 because these models have two types of “randomized” treatments – where  $t=\{0,1\}$  and where  $m=\{0,1\}$  – and thus more potential to violate the overlap assumption for a given treatment. In order to avoid violating the overlap assumption for either of these treatments using the same set of covariates, I restricted the selection model to include interest in politics, traditional partisanship, and victimization.<sup>25</sup>

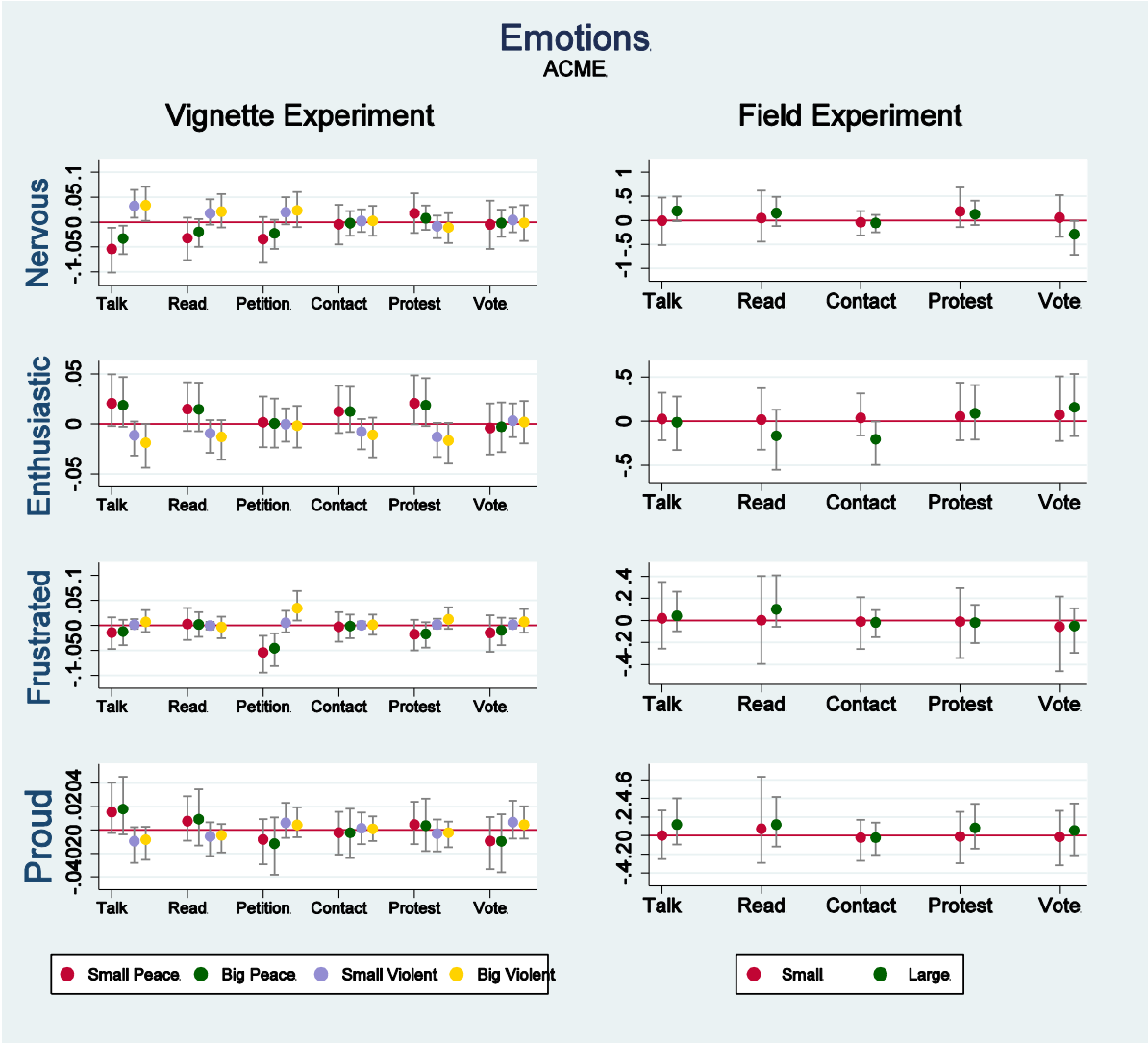
Figures 5.7, 5.8, and 5.11 show the ACME for each mediator and each treatment, calculated using the parametric procedure advocated in Imai, Keele, and Tingley (2010) and Imai, Keele, Tingley, and Yamamoto (2011). This procedure simulates unobservable potential outcomes (where the mediator responds to treatment, but there is no treatment present) using quasi-Bayesian Monte Carlo simulations (Imai et al. 2010). The algorithm fits models to the outcome and mediator variables parametrically, simulates model parameters using their sampling distributions, and uses this information to simulate potential outcomes for simulated values of the mediator (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000; Imai et al. 2010). This effect may be interpreted as the effect of each protest treatment on each engagement indicator that is due to the mediator in question. In order to achieve a significant ACME, there must be a significant effect from  $T$  to  $M$  and from  $M$  to  $Y$ . Consequently, as is readily apparent, the small and limited effects of the mediators on engagement imposed strict bounds on the potential indirect effects. This is particularly true for the field experiment. Just as it was nearly impossible to decipher any mediator effects among the small sample in the field experiment, the ACMEs are also illusive. Once again, the confidence intervals are far wider than they are for the vignette experiment. While the range of the Y axis extends from -0.1 to 0.1 for the vignette experiment, the Y axis ranges from -1.0 to 1.0 in the field experiment. Clearly, there is

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<sup>25</sup> I only selected these variables because every additional covariate violated the overlap assumption for some mediator/treatment.

not enough power to identify most of the mediation effects, given the low “treatment effects” of the mediators. This is particularly true for the small protest treatment, which had a particularly small set of compliers. The models did detect some mediation effects for the large protest. For both protests, there was insufficient variation and power to estimate the ACMEs for the observational treatments (taking the pamphlet or signing the petition). These engagement indicators had to be removed from the results.

Figure 5.7:

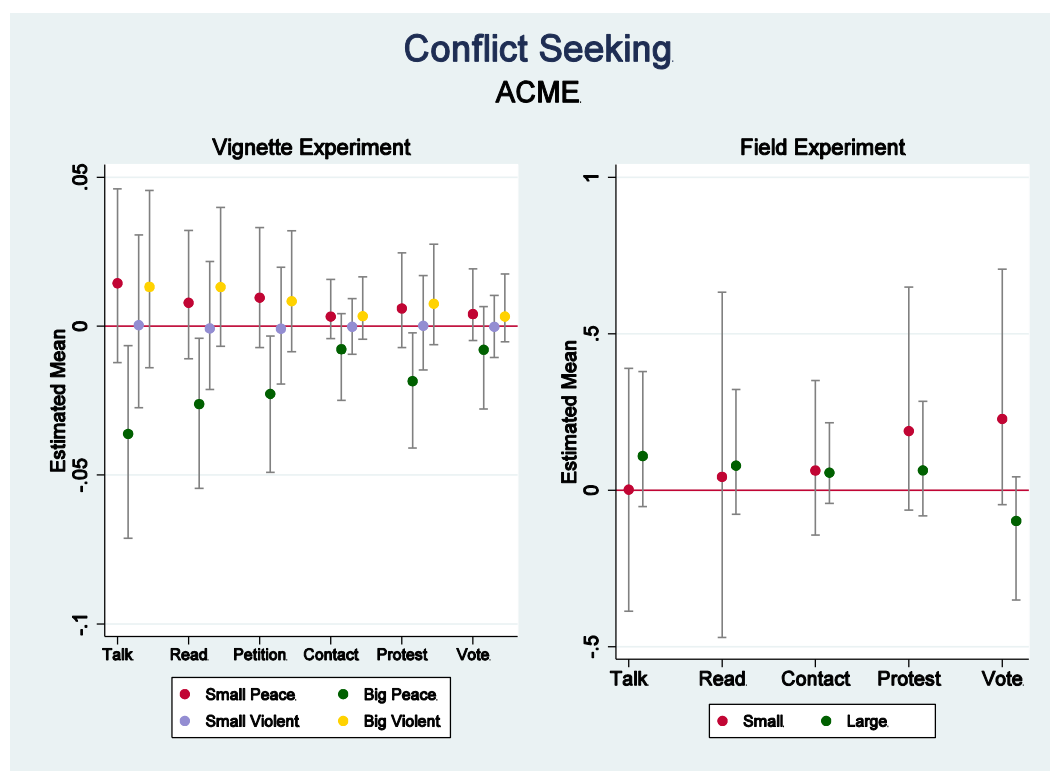


There is some evidence to suggest that protests drive engagement and disengagement by triggering emotions in distinct ways. Recalling how peaceful protests and violent protests sparked opposite emotions, those emotions channel the political engagement in opposite directions. Peaceful protests, both large and small, make individuals feel less nervous and ultimately become less likely to participate. The opposite effect takes place for violent protest vignettes, which lead to higher levels of participation by triggering nervousness. The strongest effects in the ACMEs reflect the results of previous models, which suggested that the strongest effects of the mediators on outcomes were channeled from negative emotions to deliberative participation. While nervousness channels the protest effect to a couple of different engagement indicators at the 90% level, the clearest effects are channeled to the willingness to talk about politics with friends and family. For the field experiment, the large protest also channels some effects through nervousness. Specifically, the increased willingness to read about politics and the decreased willingness to vote for the issue are channeled through nervousness (at least at the 90% level). The other negative emotion, frustration, is less effective as a mediator. It does not mediate any of the real protest effects, and it only channels the vignettes towards the willingness to sign a petition. Similar to the nervousness, the peaceful protests tend to generate less willingness to engage through this mechanism, and the violent protests increase willingness to engage by channeling frustration.

The positive emotions operated in a similar fashion. Enthusiasm and pride channeled the effects of the peaceful protest vignettes and violent protest vignettes in opposite directions. Enthusiasm was an effective mediator for talking about politics and protest, but pride only mediated the *Talk* indicator. Meanwhile, the positive emotions had limited mediation effects for the real protest treatments. The only outcome mediated by enthusiasm (at the 90% level) was willingness to contact a politician. This means that individuals who encountered the large protest

and triggered enthusiasm were less likely to contact politicians. Pride, on the other hand, did not significantly mediate any outcomes in the field experiment.

**Figure 5.8:**



Conflict-seeking only significantly channeled one of the treatments: the large, peaceful protest vignette. Respondents exposed to this treatment felt less willing to seek out a conflictive debate and indirectly less likely to participate in conflictive behaviors such as political deliberation and protest behavior. This result, of course, corresponds with Figure 5.1, which counterintuitively exposed this treatment to be only trigger for conflict aversion. These findings are difficult to interpret because of the competing directions of the causal effects. In Figure 5.1, the treatment is found to trigger conflict *aversion*, but it is conflict *seeking* that drives engagement. When the ACMEs are calculated, the effect of the treatment is weakly negative. The field experiment is difficult to interpret as a result of the wide confidence intervals, but both treatments do increase

participation for most behaviors with being channeled through the conflict-seeking mediator. Ultimately, although only one treatment appears to be significant, the ACMEs provide compelling evidence for the conflict aversion mechanism. That is, although it is not clear which protests are most likely to trigger this reaction, I find that protests that *do* trigger conflict aversion can have powerful disengaging consequences.

The literature on conflict aversion provides some explanation as to why this mechanism may not have resulted in coherent findings for the analysis above. This mechanism is unlike the other causal mechanisms in one important respect: aversion to conflict may be aggravated by political conflict, but it is essentially an exogenous personality trait. The most prominent literature on aversion to political conflict (Theiss-Morse 2001, 2002; Mutz 2002, 2006) discusses the willingness of individuals to tolerate political conflict as a fixed component of their personalities. Some people tolerate conflict, and others do not. This implies that the conflict-seeking mechanism may be conditional on the individual's pre-treatment levels of conflict aversion or seeking. While the ACMEs calculated above do not find theory-driven evidence for the conflict-driven mechanism, it is possible that the effects are limited to conflict-seeking or conflict-avoiding respondents.

When the relationship between two variables,  $X$  and  $Y$ , is conditional on a third variable,  $Z$ , that third variable is said to moderate the effects of  $X$ . The same is true of mediation. Rather than focusing the *average* causal mediation effects, I will now examine the *moderated* mediation effects (James and Brett 1984; Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes 2007). Moderated mediation models consider the heterogeneity of effects, driven by a specified moderator, that may exist in the causal paths between  $X$  and  $M$ ,  $M$  and  $Y$ , or both. In this case, the indirect effect of protests through conflict-seeking may be moderated by the respondent's pre-treatment levels of conflict tolerance.



To calculate and report the conditional indirect effects, I will use Tingley et al.'s (2014) R package for mediation, which contains a module for moderated mediation. These models compare the mediation effects of protests through conflict-seeking for different values of the moderator, the *Debator* indicator. This indicator asks if respondents enjoy discussing politics with people who disagree with them, and it is coded as 0 for conflict avoiders and 1 for conflict enjoyers. In this dissertation, I will only analyze the data from the vignette experiment because this experiment has a much larger sample size and greater control over the treatments.

Table 5.1 below presents the difference between ACMEs ( $X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$ ) and ADEs ( $X \rightarrow Y$ ) for conflict avoiders ( $Debator = 0$ ) and conflict enjoyers ( $Debator = 1$ ). For each model, I set the quasi-Bayesian Monte Carlo simulations to 2,000 to reduce variation in estimates.

**Table 5.1:**

<b>Moderated Mediation: Conflict Seeking</b>					
		<b>ACME</b>		<b>ADE</b>	
		<b>Difference</b>	<b>P-value</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Big Peaceful	Talk	-0.003	0.91	0.157	0.41
	Read	-0.025	0.31	0.024	0.90
	Petition	0.002	0.96	-0.012	0.96
	Contact	-0.009	0.54	-0.134	0.46
	Protest	-0.020	0.29	-0.033	0.84
	Vote	-0.017	0.31	0.185	0.35
Big Violent	Talk	-0.055	0.08	-0.054	0.76
	Read	-0.022	0.40	-0.095	0.62
	Petition	-0.037	0.09	0.064	0.76
	Contact	-0.008	0.62	0.013	0.92
	Protest	-0.015	0.43	-0.085	0.65
	Vote	0.000	0.99	-0.278	0.16
Small Peaceful	Talk	-0.007	0.82	-0.034	0.86
	Read	0.001	0.99	0.044	0.79
	Petition	-0.007	0.74	0.187	0.31
	Contact	0.001	0.90	-0.107	0.55
	Protest	0.001	0.93	-0.031	0.86
	Vote	0.005	0.68	-0.288	0.15
Small Violent	Talk	0.041	0.23	-0.058	0.78
	Read	0.028	0.21	-0.038	0.84
	Petition	0.030	0.17	-0.118	0.57
	Contact	0.009	0.45	0.211	0.24
	Protest	0.020	0.21	-0.027	0.88
	Vote	0.009	0.60	0.099	0.63

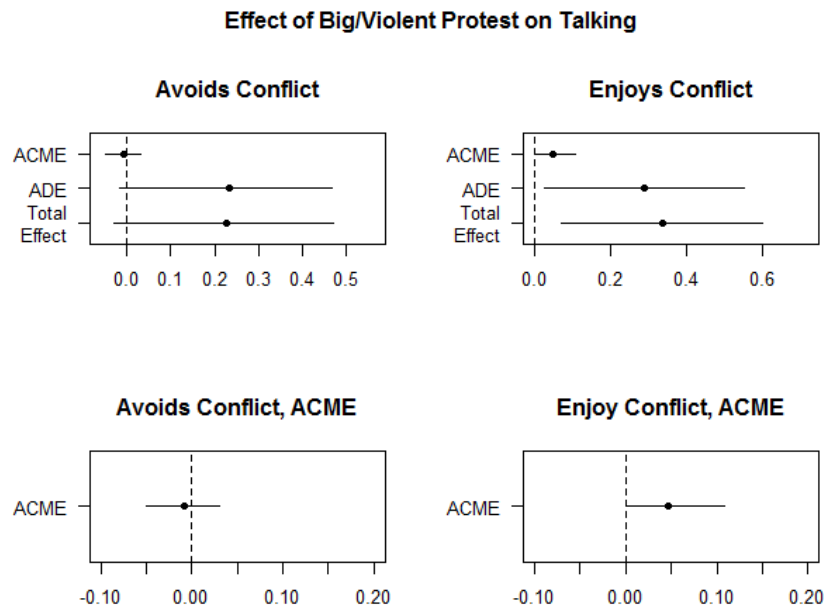
Table 5.1 contains little evidence of moderated mediation. For most models, the difference between conflict avoiders and conflict enjoyers is not significantly different from 0. Although insignificant, it is curious that the signs of the estimates differ so starkly between the large protest and small protest treatments. If one were to take the signs of the estimates at face value, this would

indicate that the size of the protest would trigger the conflict mechanism more sharply than the protest's level of violence.

There are two significant differences (at the 90% level) between ACMEs of conflict avoiders and conflict enjoyers, and both of them are associated with the big, violent protest treatment. As the table indicates, these protests are transmitted more strongly through the conflict-seeking mechanism for conflict enjoyers than for conflict avoiders. Through this mechanism, conflict enjoyers respond to large, violent protests by increasing in their willingness to talk about political issues and their willingness to sign petitions.

To illustrate these conditional effects, I produce two plots below, one for each significant dependent variable. For each plot, the top panels produce all of the causal effects – the indirect effect, the direct effect, and the total effect – for each subset of the sample. The bottom two panels concentrate on the indirect effect.

**Figure 5.9:**



**Figure 5.10:**

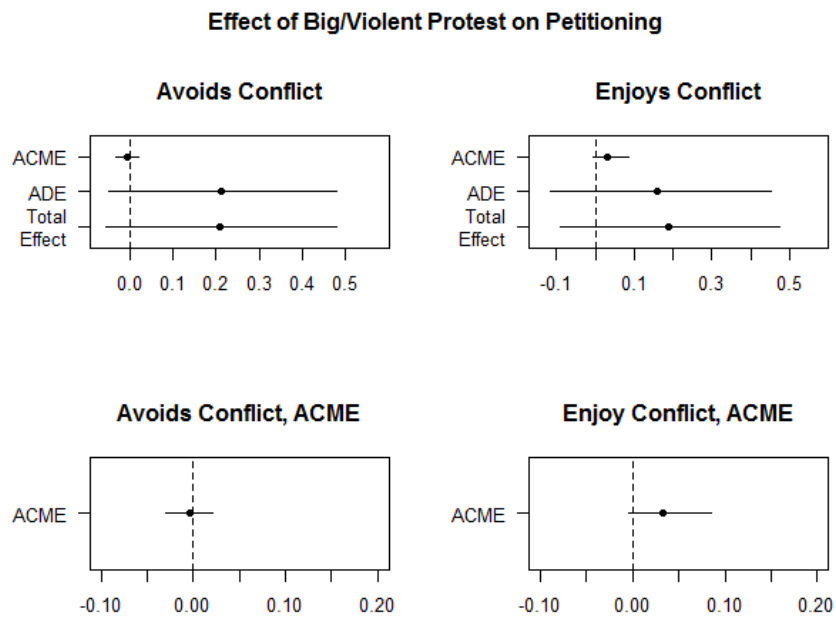


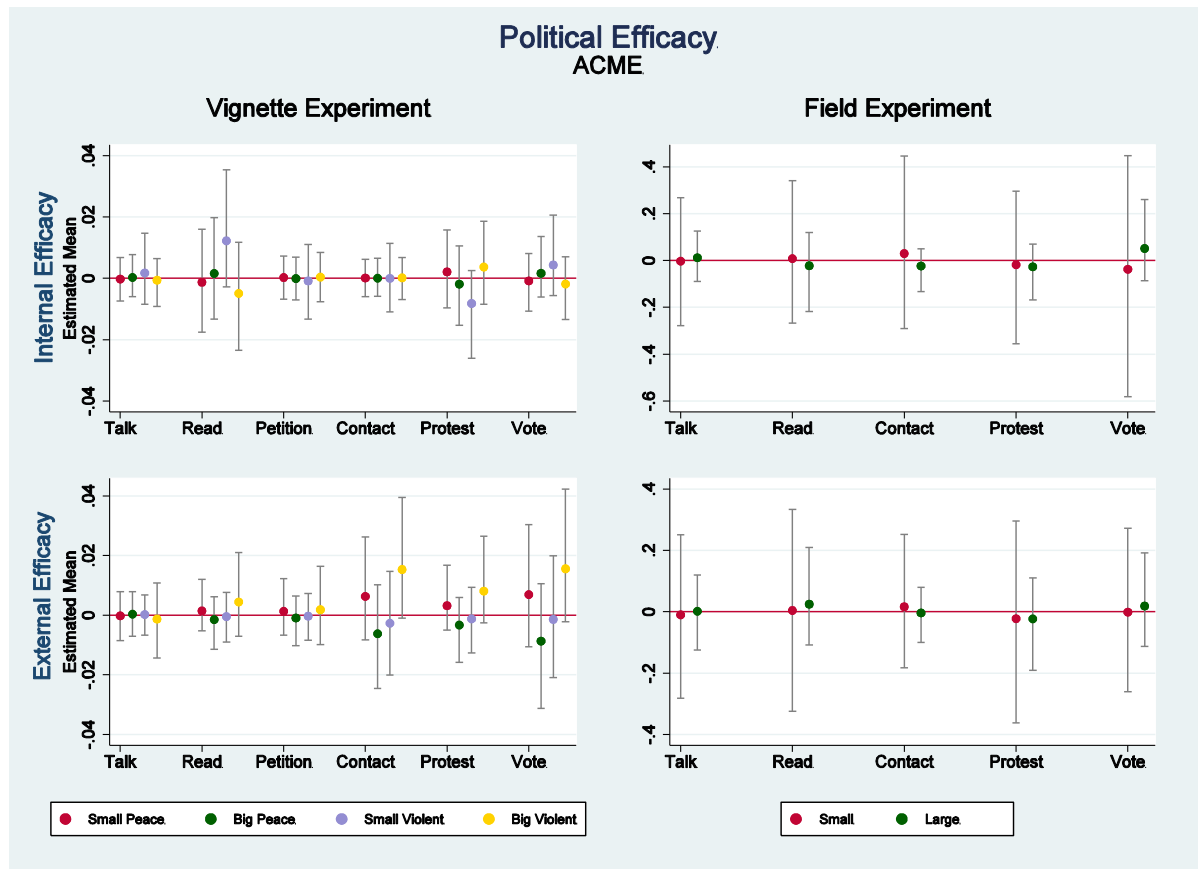
Figure 5.7 presents the moderated effects of the conflict-seeking mechanism on the *Talk* dependent variable, and Figure 5.8 presents the moderated effects for the *Petition* indicator. Conflict avoiders do not seem to have any causal link between protests, conflict-seeking, and engagement. However, for both figures, conflict enjoyers do show some weakly significant indirect (and, in Figure 5.7, direct) effects of protests through the conflict-seeking mediator. While the confidence intervals are wide, the ACMEs are of relatively high magnitude compared to the pooled ACMEs.

Overall, the story behind these figures is far more attuned to theory than the pooled analyses. According to Figures 5.7-5.8, individuals who actually enjoy conflict will engage in politics when exposed to protests, and they do so through the conflict mechanism. This provides some support for *Hypothesis 6*. Furthermore, these conditional effects are limited to the large and violent protest treatment, the most conflictual protest treatment. This refers directly to *Hypothesis 5*, stating that more conflictive types of protests were most likely to activate the conflict mechanism. While there was no evidence to support this hypothesis in the pooled mediation effects, it may be the case that this mechanism is limited to the subset of respondents who respond most to conflict. Because the results are so weak and only barely reach statistical significance, it will be important to replicate these findings in further research, perhaps in a more controlled lab setting.

The final potential mediator, political efficacy, continues to show null effects in Figure 5.11. This is entirely unsurprising, given that the ACME is calculated as the product of the treatment on the mediator (which low and insignificant) and the mediator on the outcome (also low and insignificant). Ultimately, despite all of the arguments for the threshold model of engagement, and despite the increases in efficacy that inspire participation among protest

participants, political efficacy has proven to be a negligible mediator of protests on public engagement.

**Figure 5.11:**



## 5.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In summary, the sequential analysis of protests and their mediating causal processes yielded some curious findings. Two causal mechanisms show strong statistical support, though they are strong in distinct ways. From the treatments to the mediators, the most notable causal mechanism appears to come from emotions. The emotional mechanism is supported for various

treatments and is quite consistent with the literature on the emotions and political engagement. However, from the mediators to the outcomes, the strongest predictor of engagement/disengagement is conflict aversion. Only one of the treatments influenced this mediator at all, and it was not a highly conflictive treatment. I further probed into the conflict mechanism by calculating the conditional indirect effects as they are moderated by the respondent's pre-treatment tolerance of political conflict. Consistent with the theoretical expectation, effects of the most conflictive protest treatment – the *Big/Violent* protest vignette – generated increases in engagement for respondents who enjoy conflict and had no effect on those who avoid conflict. Meanwhile, other mediators showed little or no capacity to channel the effects of protests. This is particularly surprising for political efficacy, which is a fundamental factor in rational choice models and threshold models of participation.

Ultimately, most of the evidence for causal mediation was quite weak. The field experiment simply did not have enough power to find effects for psychological processes, and even the vignette experiment showed weak relationships between the mediators and the outcomes. While the directions of the effects between mediators and outcomes were all consistent with the literature, the effect sizes were very small and they ultimately weakened the ACME calculations. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the effects from the treatments to the mediators were quite strong and theoretically interesting in their own right.

Taken together, these mechanisms do not clearly explain the two-sided effects of protest exposure. The positive effects of engagement make sense. AIT states that positive emotions would increase engagement on a broad level and that anxiety would increase deliberative engagement. Thus, the fact that nearly all protest treatments have strong effects on emotions would suggest that

all protests would have positive effects on engagement, but this is certainly not the case for protests that are personally confronted.

I will end this chapter with a concluding conjecture that, unfortunately, cannot be verified empirically. Namely, I expect that further analysis might find that the effects of protests are channeled through conflict aversion when those protests are personally confronted. The ACMEs revealed a very strong effect from conflict aversion to disengagement. This effect was far stronger than the effect of emotions. Indeed, the effects of emotional triggers were surprisingly weak – even inconsistent – for the effects of emotions on engagement. In theory, the conflict aversion mechanism would do well to explain the divergent effects of confrontational protest exposure. Perhaps personal confrontation has greater potential to trigger this mechanism than I was able to find? Perhaps I would have found a stronger effect if I had measured the indicator differently? Or if I had more statistical power? The competing causal mechanisms (where media exposure drives emotional reactions, and confrontational exposure trigger conflict aversion) could explain why protest exposure matters so much for the direction of causal effects. This is, of course, only a conjecture, and further research (with higher sample sizes) is necessary to explain the causal mediation effects of confrontational protests. More research – perhaps using different indicators of conflict aversion - will be necessary to understand whether or not this theoretically plausible mechanism channels the effect of protest confrontation.



## **6.0 PROTESTS AND BEHAVIOR IN BRAZILIAN MUNICIPALITIES: A TEST OF EXTERNAL VALIDITY**

In Chapters 4 and 5, the vignette and field experiments found that protest activity can influence public engagement. The direction of the effect is largely conditional on the type of exposure: hearing about the protest indirectly leads to engagement, but personal confrontation causes disengagement. An important finding from these experiments is that the effects are mostly homogenous in terms of protest characteristics. Although more research is likely required for a full understanding of the causal mechanism, the most evidence suggests that protests transmit effects on engagement through emotions or conflict aversion.

The empirical evidence behind these claims is based on a field experiment in Mexico City and specifically refers to treatments from the anti-violence protests that were incited by the mass abduction and alleged killing of 43 student teachers in Iguala. Do we expect these findings to hold for other protests? Do they extend to other cities? Other countries? Or are these findings limited to the precise conditions of the case at hand?

In this chapter, I test the generalizability of the experimental results through an examination of protests and public opinion in Brazil. Adhering to the dominant methodology in extant work, I merge protest data with a representative survey in order to assess the relationship between protests and public opinion. If the disadvantage of this empirical strategy is its limited capacity to isolate micro-level effects and mechanisms, its greatest advantage is its generalizability and potentially broad range of scope. A survey provides a representative sample for the individual-level, and a

comprehensive data set of protests capitalizes on the diversity of protest activity. This strategy, therefore, complements the micro-level evidence from the experiments well.

In this chapter, I conduct a series of multi-level models of protests and engagement in Brazil. Brazil is an ideal case to extend the findings from the Mexico City field experiment. In this country, protests display an enormous variety in terms of tactics, sizes, and messages. While protesters in many countries tend to over-represent a single political party or social class, protests in Brazil represent voices from a very wide spectrum of ages, party identification, and social classes.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, Brazil's relatively unique geographical pattern of protest activity gives it a comparative advantage over other cases for a subnational analysis. In many countries, protests concentrate in one or two key cities, particularly national capitals, because these sites provide considerable media attention and target the most strategic audience. However, my data suggest that Brazil does not follow this pattern. Protests are widely dispersed throughout the country, allowing for wider city-level variation. Finally, Brazil and Mexico share a common history of protest (Bruhn 2008). For this reason, Bruhn selects Mexico City and two Brazilian cities for her thorough analysis of the sources of protest in Latin American cities. After comparing a wide range of possible cities to analyze, she argues that Mexico and Brazil coincide with similar levels of democracy, public support for the government, society-party linkages, and most importantly, forms and sources of protest. One meaningful difference between the two, she maintains, is geography. In Mexico, protests cluster in the capital city, but this is not the case in Brazil. This makes for the ideal comparison to extend my experimental findings from Mexico to a wide variety of cities.

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<sup>26</sup> See Bruhn 2008 for a thorough discussion of protests in Brazilian cities

I test the generalizability of the experimental results by merging original protest data coded from 19 Brazilian state newspapers with a longitudinal survey fielded in 2010. Political engagement, operationalized as interest in politics, political persuasion, and intention to vote in upcoming national and state elections, is modeled as a response to a dynamic political environment with varying degrees of protest activity. Concordant with the experiment, I find that protests can both positively and negatively affect levels political engagement among the localities in which they take place. In this case, the direction of the effect is contingent on the protest characteristics, which I argue to be a proxy for the probability of personal confrontation. Finally, because causal effects are less discernible for observational data than for experimental designs, I conclude the chapter with a series of cross-lagged structural equation models. These models support the expectation that perceptions of protests generate changes in political engagement more strongly than engagement drives perceptions of protests.

## **6.1 PROTESTS IN BRAZIL**

In this section, I will empirically justify Brazil as an appropriate case to test the generalizable effects of protest. I will present my original data on protests in Brazilian municipalities to argue that 1) the geographic dispersion of protests in Brazil allows me to test the effects of protests in a variety of contexts, and 2) that the diversity of protest groups enables a test of a wide sample of protests.

For this study, I collected original data on all protests in Brazilian municipalities through the press. Limiting my analysis to the 60 municipalities present in the survey sample, I conducted careful content analysis through a collection of 19 state-level newspapers in Brazil. The state-level

approach in this paper takes advantage of the local coverage of smaller newspapers and the broader access of larger newspapers. Compiling data from state-level newspapers is a major advancement in comparative studies of protests, which normally collect data from survey accounts or databases of major international newspapers. Both of these traditional sources of protest data are widely known to bias the event counts in favor of the largest or most destructive protests (Franzosi 1987).

The data collection began with a search for key words such as protest (*protesto* or *manifestação*) and strike (*greve*). This search resulted in an enormous number of protest activities, only some of which were genuine protests. I coded the activity as a protest if it involved an organized, public display with five or more people. The total protests are defined by the number of protests that occur in each individual's municipality between the beginning of the year and the precise date of interview. In accordance with the Latin American Political Protest Project, each distinct day of protest represents a new protest (Garrison 2001).<sup>27</sup>

Corresponding with the randomized factors in the vignette experiment, each protest event is coded according to its level of violence and size as these characteristics are described in news reports. A protest is coded as *Violent* if there are any resulting casualties or if there was a physical confrontation with the police. A protest is coded as *Big* if it is reported to have 1,000 participants or more, and it is coded as *Small/Medium* if otherwise.<sup>28</sup> Additional details were coded for each

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<sup>27</sup> This was primarily an issue for strikes, which could last for several weeks.

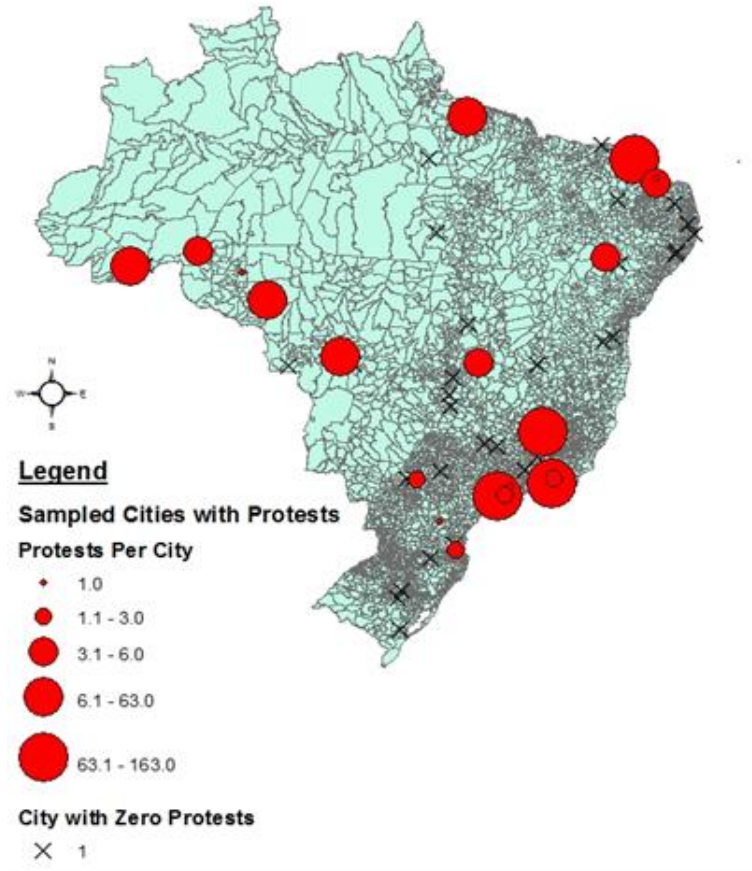
<sup>28</sup> The number of participants can be a highly contested and subjective characteristic of a protest, and scholars tend to be suspicious of the estimates provided in newspapers. On the one hand, there is a high degree media bias. Conservative papers will consistently underestimate and liberal papers will overestimate the number of participants. On the other hand, even with the best intentions, it is a difficult characteristic to estimate accurately. A protest of 300 participants looks very similar to a protest with 500 participants. Finally, it is important to note that the number of participants often remains unreported. For these reasons, I do not use the raw number of participants in these models and simply organize them into protests with *more* or *less* than 1,000 participants.

protest, such as the frame and the principle actors, but this information does not serve to extend the experimental results and is not directly pertinent to the analysis.

The dataset includes 678 protest events (including strikes) between January 01, 2010 and January 01, 2011 in the relevant municipalities. The average number of protests per municipality was 11.13 for the year. Many cities have 0 protests throughout the year, while a few cities have over a hundred. The maximum number of protests for a municipality was 155 in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. As would be expected, the largest cities (such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte) experienced the highest levels of protest activity. The reasons are straightforward – more people to protest, higher capacity to organize in urban areas, and greater probability of media attention.

**Figure 6.1:**

**Protests in Sampled Brazilian Municipalities**



The data collected for this article are a testament to the bias and inaccuracy so rampant in most protest event counts. The norm in protest event analysis is to create or use an existing database that codes protests as they are reported in major newspapers. The New York Times is a particularly common source for these databases, as is the use of Lexis-Nexis for international news. Geographically restricted analyses sometimes use major national-level newspapers for more detailed coverage. The bias of protest media coverage has been widely criticized in the literature (Oliver and Maney 2000; Earl et al. 2004), but such data are tolerated as, at least, a general proxy for protest events. The data presented for this article suggest that the events covered in major

newspapers are not only incomplete; they depict an inaccurate image of where protests take place. Consider the case of Belo Horizonte. According to state-level newspapers, Belo Horizonte experiences the highest levels of protest activity in the country, more than São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro. However, Brazil's major national newspaper (O Estado de São Paulo) only reported 11 protests in Belo Horizonte for the year, and exactly 0 were identified in a Lexis-Nexis search through all English-speaking newspapers.

Who protests in Brazil? In Table 6.1, I organize the protests according to the groups involved.

**Table 6.1:**

<b>Protests in 60 Brazilian Municipalities, 2010</b>		
<b>Organizing Group</b>	<b>Number of Protests</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>Organized Groups</b>		
Students	22	3.24%
Workers	412	60.77%
Organized Workers	50	7.37%
NGOs	8	1.18%
<i>Total</i>	<i>492</i>	<i>72.57%</i>
<b>Social Movements</b>		
Women	3	0.44%
Gay Rights	2	0.29%
Indigenous Groups	2	0.29%
Sem-Teto / MST	17	2.51%
Religious Groups	3	0.44%
Environmental/Animal Rights	6	0.88%
Broad Movement	12	1.77%
<i>Total</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>6.64%</i>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Residents	109	16.08%
Victims' Sympathizers	15	2.21%
Other	19	2.80%
<i>Total</i>	<i>143</i>	<i>21.09%</i>
<b>TOTAL<sup>29</sup></b>	<b>680</b>	<b>100.29%</b>

The diversity of actors in Table 6.1 suggests that Brazil is, indeed, a promising case for this study. Interestingly, typical organizing groups associated with social movements – Afro-Brazilians, indigenous groups, the Movimento Sem Terra - make up a very small percent of the total protests. Nearly a quarter of all protests – residents, victims' sympathizers, and others - are led by groups that are less organized and less present in the international media. This finding concurs with other comprehensive analyses of protests in Brazilian cities (Bruhn 2008). Indeed,

<sup>29</sup> The number of protests here exceeds the total number of protests because a couple of protests were organized by more than one of these groups.



while social movements tend to attract a disproportionate amount of attention in academic literature, they only organize a minority of protests in Brazil.

For the remainder of this chapter, I will focus on demonstrations as a subset of all protests, removing strikes from the set. Strikes represent a unique type of protest and typically involve theories and analyses that are distinct from those for demonstrations (Murillo and Roncini 2004; Robertson and Teielbaum 2011; Arce and Mangonnet 2012). These types of protests often occur without any visual mobilization, which is a normal procedure for all other types of protests. Additionally, the ability of strikes to disrupt the local population is highly variable and requires analysis on a case-by-case basis. For example, a strike from the telecommunications sector will be highly disruptive in some cities and hardly noticed in others. Meanwhile, demonstrations are somewhat more homogenous in their ability to disrupt, and the level of disruption is largely predicated on fixed characteristics of the demonstration. Finally, because each protest-day is considered a new protest, the extended time duration of strikes can easily distort the total number of protests. Without further investigation, it is not clear how individuals respond to these protests over time, though it seems obvious that the impact on engagement would not be constant throughout the duration of the strike. Thus, because they are distinct and potentially distorting protests, I use *Demonstrations* as the reduced indicator for pooled protest activity (consisting of all non-strike protests such as demonstrations, marches, riots, etc.).

## **6.2 DATA ON POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT**

Using 3-wave panel data throughout 2010, I estimate a series of hierarchical models, where engagement is modeled as a function of individual and municipality-level variables. The

individual-level analysis is conducted through use of the Brazilian Electoral Panel Study, a nationally representative survey of Brazil in 2010 (Ames et al. 2013). The first wave of the survey was conducted in March by the Latin American Public Opinion Project, and the subsequent waves took place in August and November with an abridged version of the questionnaire. The survey is comprised of home interviews in 60 municipalities with over 2000 Brazilians between the ages of 17 and 93. Contextual variables on the municipalities were taken at the municipality level from IPEA (the Institute of Applied Economic Research in Brasilia) (IPEA 2010). These data are taken from the year 2010, with the exception of municipality level data from the Firjan Municipal Development Indices taken in 2007 (FIRJAN 2007).

I operationalize the dependent variable, political engagement, through four indicators: *Political Interest*, *Persuasion*, *National Vote*, and *State Vote*. Given I am using a large, omnibus survey, I am quite fortunate to have four compelling indicators that capture multiple dimensions of political engagement.<sup>30</sup> *Political Interest*, an indicator of psychological engagement, is quantified through a survey item that asks, “On a scale of 1 to 4, how interested are you in politics?” *Persuasion* is a proxy for political deliberation. In each of the three waves of data collection, respondents were asked “During the elections, some people try to convince other people to vote for some party or candidate. How often did you try to convince other people to vote for some party or candidate?” I also examine more overt engagement through the *National* and *State Vote* indicators. These items indicate the willingness of an individual to vote “If the presidential/gubernatorial election were to take place tomorrow.” They are coded as dichotomous

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<sup>30</sup> I also wanted to include an indicator for individual protest. Although the survey does measure protest in the first wave, the item asks if individuals have protested *in the last twelve months*. This item would not capture the effect of protest from wave to wave, but instead would capture protest activity that took place before the media-reported protests.

variables where 1 indicates the individual's decision to vote for the candidate of the president's party or for a candidate from an opposition candidate. They are coded as 0 if the individual expresses an intention not to vote or to deliberately submit a null ballot. Of these four variables, only *Political Interest* and *Persuasion* are measured in all three waves, while *National Vote* and *State Vote* are only measured for the first wave of the survey.

Contextual protest activity is not intended to be the only, or even the primary, component of an individual's level of engagement. Rather, the goal of this research note is to show that protests represent a significant and understudied component of the equation. Also included in the model are the most well-established individual level and contextual determinants of political engagement in Brazil.

To begin, demographic variables are obviously important explanatory factors. Older, more educated, and male respondents are more likely to be more actively engaged in politics (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995; Campbell et al. 1960; Desposato and Norrander 2009; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). I also control for *Attention to News* and *External Efficacy* (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Almond and Verba 1963; Seligson 1980; Abramson and Aldrich 1982; McLeod, Scheufele, and Moy 1999). For the dynamic models of *Political Interest*, these items are lagged to ameliorate the reciprocal effects of synchronous interest and attention to news or efficacy. I also include political variables that might engage individuals in Brazilian politics by helping them to navigate such a notoriously convoluted and tangled political system (Mainwaring 1999; Hunter 2010; Mische 2008). The first is *Partisanship*, a dummy variable that indicates whether or not the respondent identifies with a political party. This is an important control variable because it is expected that, in a political system as complicated as that of Brazil, individuals who have a party heuristic to lean on might find it much easier to engage in politics (Lau and Redlawsk 2001). I have also included a

dummy variable for individuals that self-identify on an ideological scale (*Ideology*) and an item that measures support for then-President Lula (*Lula Support*). These items help control for the possibility that partisanship in Brazil may not indicate political cognizance, but rather support for the former President Lula da Silva or as the beneficiaries of government funds (Samuels 2006).

I control for the contextual effect of protests with other theoretically relevant contextual variables. Regardless of an individual's education or income, an individual who lives in a widely educated or rich community might benefit from the resources and networks around him. Consequently, I include variables for the size, (*City Size*), education (*City Education*), and an index of income and employment (*City Economic Index*) for each municipality. *City Size* is measured through an item in the survey that codes each city on a scale of small town to state capital, and the education and economic index variables come from the FIRJAN data.

### **6.3 TESTING THE EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS WITH OBSERVATIONAL DATA**

To be sure, it is not a straight-forward procedure to test experimental results with observational data. As I explained in Chapters 2 and 3, merging city-level protest data with individual-level survey data is an imperfect methodological strategy to examine the public effects of protest. The most pressing problem is the inability to verify exposure to the protest or source of exposure. This inevitably adds noise to the analysis and prevents further examination of the experiments' most dramatic results. The uncertainty of exposure also creates challenges in testing micro-level causal mechanisms.

Although it is impossible to verify exposure, there are certain conditions under which physical confrontation will be more likely. For example, some protests are harder to ignore than

others. I argue that protests' characteristics will be critical in this regard because some protests easily escape physical exposure – such as small protests and non-violent protests – while their large and violent counterparts have more potential for confrontation. This argument seemingly contradicts the experimental results, which found only trivial effects of protest characteristics. However, while the experiment can isolate the independent effects of characteristics and exposure, the survey analysis must take into account the interdependence of these components. Thus, I expect that the protests most likely to result in physical confrontation – large protests and violent protests – will disengage respondents, much as the field experiment led to disengagement. Conversely, the protests that were reported in the media but were not likely to confront many respondents – small, non-violent protests – will mimic the engaging effects of the vignette experiment.

In a similar vein, there are contextual conditions which render physical confrontation with protests more likely. Specifically, I refer to the size of the respondent's city. In large cities, it can be very easy to deliberately avoid or unintentionally ignore protests. This much was demonstrated in Table 3.7 in Chapter 3, where most respondents reported to have encountered few – if any – protests in the past year. And of course, that finding was not based on a representative sample; the sample consisted of respondents who live close to the city center in a major capital city that experiences several protests per day. I suspect that this trend is not limited to Mexico City, but is common in capital cities and large cities. Meanwhile, protests have much stronger potential to force confrontations in small towns, in which a traffic jam on one major road can cause massive disruption and greater proportions of people congregate in the same public areas. Therefore, I expect that the negative effects of protest will be much more widespread in small towns, where confrontation is more likely, and effects will be minimal in larger cities.

I test the relationship between city-level protests and individual-level changes in political engagement through a series of three- and two-level random-intercept models. For all models of *Political Interest* and *Persuasion*, three-level models are organized as repeated observations (level 1) nested within individuals (level 2) who are nested within municipalities (level 3). For models of *National Vote* and *State Vote*, where only one wave of data is available, I estimate two-level hierarchical models of individuals nested in municipalities. These models capture the unobserved heterogeneity among individuals over time and between individuals living under similar contexts, improving confidence in estimating key individual and contextual-level variables. Intraclass Correlation Coefficients for the individual level and municipality level were calculated to determine whether or not there is a case to be made for random effects. The ICCs for both levels are statistically significant, although the ICC for the individual-level group is noticeably higher than the municipality-level group. This is to be expected, as single individuals should report less variance over time than clustered individuals within municipalities in any particular moment. Jointly, the ICCs indicate that a multilevel model is more appropriate than assuming independence among observations.

The estimation of each model is based on the availability and structure of the dependent variable. The models of *Political Interest* and *Persuasion* are estimated through dynamic mixed-effect linear regressions for efficiency and clarity of presentation.<sup>31</sup> For these models, the 3-wave panel structure allows for dynamic modeling through the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable.

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<sup>31</sup> Some argue that the lagged dependent variables interfere with estimation of panel data and lead to misleading results (Achen 2000; Beck and Katz 2011). I include Table C.1 Appendix 3 that contains all of the three-wave *Political Interest* models without lagged interest. I find very little differences between the models with and without the lagged DVs. Without the lag to suppress the explanatory power of other independent variables, the coefficients in Table C.1. are higher than they are in the autoregressive models. However, the differences are very, very slight.

By including the lag, the model explicitly analyzes the changes in the dependent variable over time. The models of *National* and *State Vote* are estimated through mixed-effect logistic regressions, and all of the results are reported as marginal effects for easy interpretation.

## 6.4 RESULTS

**Table 6.2:**

<b>Pooled Demonstrations</b>				
VARIABLES	(1) Interest	(2) Persuade	(3) National Vote	(4) State Vote
Lagged DV	0.344*** (0.021)	0.249*** (0.024)		
Male	0.229*** (0.038)	0.127** (0.048)	0.004 (0.022)	0.002 (0.022)
Age	0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Education	0.025*** (0.006)	0.011 (0.007)	0.001 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)
Ideology Dummy	0.137* (0.061)	0.139+ (0.078)	0.057+ (0.033)	0.029 (0.034)
Partisanship Dummy	0.485*** (0.039)	0.319*** (0.049)	0.126*** (0.027)	0.152*** (0.028)
Lula Approval (t-1)	0.031 (0.023)	-0.011 (0.030)	0.055*** (0.013)	0.049*** (0.013)
External Efficacy (t-1)	-0.003 (0.011)	-0.001 (0.014)	-0.011+ (0.006)	-0.012+ (0.006)
Attention to News (t-1)	0.026 (0.020)	0.026 (0.026)	0.028* (0.011)	0.033** (0.011)
City Size	-0.065+ (0.038)	-0.036 (0.050)	-0.031 (0.023)	-0.043 (0.027)
City Education	-0.005 (0.347)	-0.446 (0.459)	-0.248 (0.210)	-0.656** (0.240)
City Economic Index	-0.037 (0.202)	0.096 (0.264)	0.027 (0.127)	0.079 (0.144)
Demonstrations	0.003 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.007+ (0.004)
Constant	0.658* (0.282)	1.233*** (0.368)	0.083 (0.973)	1.978+ (1.151)
Observations	1,655	1,639	1,513	1,463
Number of groups	51	51	56	56

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

Table 6.2 presents the results of the pooled models for all demonstrations. These models estimate the effect of all protests for each dependent variable. To begin, the models provide useful information about the types of individual in Brazil who tend to be more engaged in politics. Men,



individuals with higher education, individuals with ideological and partisan affiliations, Lula supporters, and news watchers are more likely to be engaged in politics than the rest of the population. Also, individuals in smaller cities are more likely to be political engaged than those in larger cities. These effects are fairly robust across models with different forms of engagement, although there are some key differences. For example, supporting former-President Lula does not make an individual more interested in politics, but it *does* make them more likely to vote than non-supporters.

Also, there is a significant effect for external efficacy on willingness to vote, but the effect is negative. That is, respondents who feel more strongly that politicians respond to votes are less likely to exercise their right to vote. The findings on efficacy are surprising in the context of the broader literature on engagement, which maintains that efficacy is an important psychological antecedent to participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). This result does, however, correspond with the mediation analysis in the Chapter 5. In both contexts, the effects of efficacy are very low, statistically insignificant, and sometimes negative. It is possible that political efficacy may operate differently in Latin American countries, and more research should be done to disentangle internal and external efficacy in these cases.

Controlling for these variables, there is practically no effect of demonstrations on individual engagement. As was expected, the models that pool all protests find little evidence that protests are related to the resident public's political engagement. For these models, there is a weak but positive effect on the willingness of a respondent to vote in a state-level election, but this effect does not carry over to other dependent variables. While null or weak findings are certainly difficult to interpret, they suggest that demonstrations do not have a clear, coherent impact on levels of political engagement when controlling for other factors.

To examine the effects of demonstrations more carefully, I disaggregate protests by their characteristics. Models 1, 3, 5, and 7 disaggregate demonstrations by the level of violence. Across most models, *Violent Protests* have a negative effect on individuals' political, and *Non-Violent Protests* have a positive effect. The main exception is for the *Persuasion* models, where neither violent nor non-violent protests have a significant effect. Models 2, 4, 6, and 8 estimate the effect of demonstration size on political engagement. I find that large protests lead to lower levels of political interest and willingness to vote in state elections, while smaller protests (of less than 1,000 participants) lead to higher levels of engagement on these two indicators.

**Table 6.3:**  
**Protest Characteristics**

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Interest	Interest	Persuade	Persuade	National Vote	National Vote	State Vote	State Vote
Lagged DV	0.345*** (0.021)	0.345*** (0.021)	0.249*** (0.024)	0.249*** (0.024)				
Male	0.232*** (0.038)	0.231*** (0.038)	0.127** (0.048)	0.127** (0.048)	0.004 (0.022)	0.004 (0.022)	0.002 (0.022)	0.003 (0.022)
Age	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Education	0.025*** (0.006)	0.025*** (0.006)	0.011 (0.007)	0.011 (0.007)	0.001 (0.003)	0.001 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)
Ideology Dummy	0.129* (0.061)	0.129* (0.061)	0.137+ (0.079)	0.138+ (0.079)	0.055+ (0.032)	0.056+ (0.033)	0.027 (0.033)	0.027 (0.034)
Partisanship Dummy	0.483*** (0.039)	0.483*** (0.039)	0.320*** (0.049)	0.319*** (0.049)	0.125*** (0.026)	0.125*** (0.027)	0.151*** (0.028)	0.150*** (0.028)
Lula Approval (t-1)	0.028 (0.023)	0.028 (0.023)	-0.011 (0.030)	-0.011 (0.030)	0.053*** (0.013)	0.055*** (0.013)	0.048*** (0.013)	0.049*** (0.013)
External Efficacy (t-1)	-0.003 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.001 (0.014)	-0.002 (0.014)	-0.010+ (0.006)	-0.011+ (0.006)	-0.012+ (0.006)	-0.012* (0.006)
Attention to News (t-1)	0.028 (0.020)	0.026 (0.020)	0.026 (0.026)	0.026 (0.026)	0.028* (0.011)	0.028* (0.011)	0.034** (0.011)	0.033** (0.011)
City Size	-0.069+ (0.037)	-0.055 (0.037)	-0.038 (0.050)	-0.036 (0.050)	-0.035 (0.022)	-0.032 (0.023)	-0.046+ (0.025)	-0.043+ (0.026)
City Education	0.154 (0.337)	0.096 (0.335)	-0.421 (0.469)	-0.441 (0.463)	-0.203 (0.199)	-0.232 (0.208)	-0.576* (0.226)	-0.617** (0.232)
City Economic Index	-0.065 (0.193)	-0.077 (0.195)	0.092 (0.265)	0.094 (0.266)	0.024 (0.119)	0.024 (0.125)	0.060 (0.134)	0.069 (0.139)
Violent	-0.056+ (0.031)		-0.016 (0.043)		-0.051+ (0.029)		-0.064+ (0.035)	
Non-Violent	0.008* (0.003)		-0.000 (0.005)		0.013* (0.006)		0.019** (0.007)	
Big		-0.101+ (0.056)		-0.007 (0.078)		-0.039 (0.040)		-0.078+ (0.046)
Small/Medium		0.004* (0.002)		-0.002 (0.003)		0.006 (0.004)		0.012* (0.005)
Constant	0.569* (0.274)	0.618* (0.274)	1.221** (0.371)	1.232*** (0.368)	-0.029 (0.932)	0.048 (0.965)	1.708 (1.095)	1.868+ (1.125)
Observations	1,655	1,655	1,639	1,639	1,513	1,513	1,463	1,463
N Groups	51	51	51	51	56	56	56	56

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

The models suggest that demonstrations are least likely to influence a respondent's willingness to try persuading people about political matters, relative to other indicators of engagement. This variable is not significant in any of the pooled or disaggregated models. Talking about politics was the most frequently affected engagement indicator in the field and vignette experiments. However, talking about politics with people is not identical to persuading people to agree with you. For the former, one may talk with someone of the same opinions and values, or one may argue with no intention of persuading. The persuasion item in the Brazilian survey is much more specific and likely indicates a unique form of engagement.

Another notable finding is that the magnitude of the effects is understandably quite small. It would be implausible for the marginal effect of one protest to be substantively large. Unlike the experimental setup, the effects for these models are diluted by substantial noise. It is impossible to know which protests the respondent may or may not be aware of or how they may have encountered it. There is also a great deal of time between survey waves, and presence of a protest in the respondent's city is not likely to have a massive effect on political engagement several months later.

The final models provide some evidence for the contextual expectations. That is, if respondents in smaller cities are more likely to be exposed to protests, the effects of protests should be stronger in these areas than in large cities. The models in Table 6.4 estimate the conditional effect of city size on pooled *Demonstrations*.

**Table 6.4:**

<b>City Size Interactions</b>				
VARIABLES	(1) Interest	(2) Persuade	(3) National Vote	(4) State Vote
Lagged DV	0.345*** (0.021)	0.250*** (0.024)		
Male	0.228*** (0.038)	0.129** (0.048)	0.004 (0.022)	0.002 (0.022)
Age	0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Education	0.025*** (0.006)	0.011 (0.007)	0.001 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)
Ideology Dummy	0.143* (0.061)	0.136+ (0.078)	0.057+ (0.033)	0.029 (0.034)
Partisanship Dummy	0.480*** (0.039)	0.323*** (0.049)	0.126*** (0.027)	0.152*** (0.028)
Lula Approval (t-1)	0.035 (0.023)	-0.014 (0.030)	0.055*** (0.013)	0.049*** (0.013)
External Efficacy (t-1)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.001 (0.014)	-0.011+ (0.006)	-0.012+ (0.006)
Attention to News (t-1)	0.028 (0.020)	0.024 (0.025)	0.028* (0.011)	0.033** (0.011)
City Size	0.147 (0.335)	-0.591 (0.443)	-0.254 (0.213)	-0.650** (0.243)
City Education	-0.024 (0.193)	0.074 (0.253)	0.027 (0.127)	0.078 (0.144)
City Economic Index	-0.070+ (0.037)	-0.030 (0.048)	-0.044 (0.071)	-0.033 (0.068)
Demonstrations	-0.202* (0.082)	0.250* (0.108)	0.007 (0.020)	0.004 (0.021)
City Size*Demonstrations	0.051* (0.020)	-0.063* (0.027)	-0.037 (0.098)	-0.007 (0.104)
Constant	0.562* (0.275)	1.316*** (0.358)	0.114 (0.976)	1.985+ (1.157)
Observations	1,655	1,639	1,513	1,463
Number of groups	51	51	56	56

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p&lt;0.001, \*\* p&lt;0.01, \* p&lt;0.05, + p&lt;0.10

The interaction between city size and demonstrations is significant for *Political Interest* and *Persuasion*, but not for the two vote variables in Table 6.4 In order to facilitate the interpretation of the interaction, I illustrate Models 1 and 2 in graphic form.

**Figure 6.2:**

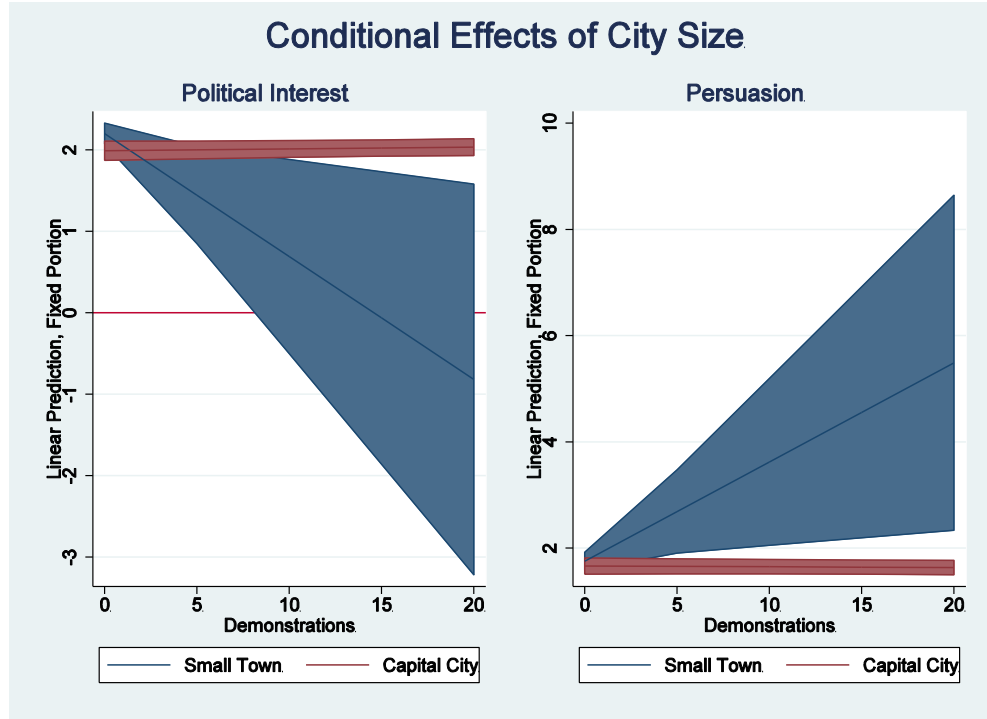


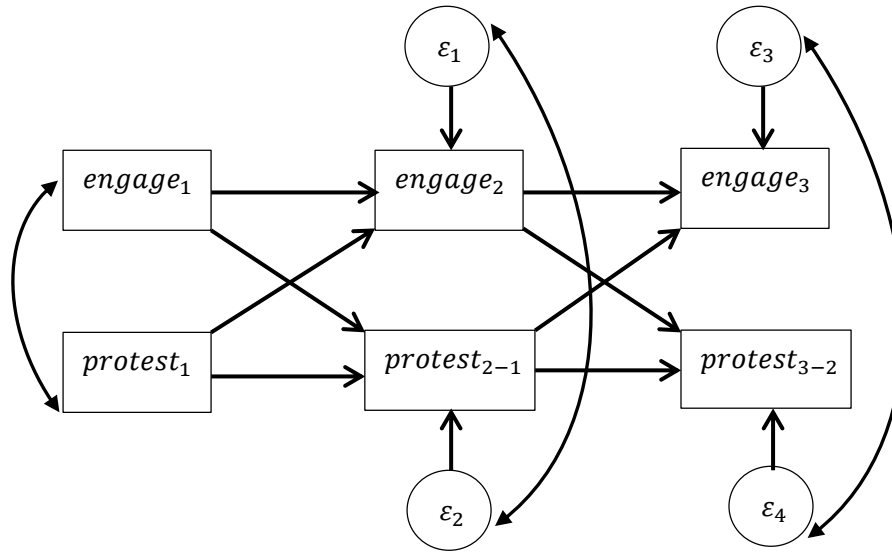
Figure 6.2 displays the dramatic conditional effects of city size. Although the left and right panels look like polar opposites, they relay the same basic message: the effect of protest on engagement depends very much on the respondent's context. The intercepts for each panel demonstrate that, in the absence of any demonstrations and controlling for the confounding covariates, political interest and willingness to persuade are indistinguishable from capital cities to small towns. However, as the number of demonstrations increases, the effects diverge considerably. Capital cities hardly observe any change with the increase in protests. Or, more precisely, the longitudinal survey did not detect any change. On the contrary, an increase in protest activity in small towns has striking effects on political engagement. Looking at each panel separately, the specific effects that protests have in small towns can vary enormously. In small towns, the demonstrations decrease political interest, but they increase attempts at political persuasion. In capital cities, the survey detects little to no change in either variable as the number

of protests increases. These findings support the expectation that protests induce effects on political engagement in contexts where confrontational exposure is more likely. That is, demonstrations yield stronger effects in small towns because heavy protest activity is far more disruptive in these contexts than they are in large cities, where self-selection and geography can prevent individuals from ever encountering protests.

## 6.5 ENDOGENEITY

Endogeneity is a potentially important concern for the empirical analysis because it is possible that political interest and engagement increase the likelihood of protests. While the experimental design was largely protected from endogeneity, this analysis uses observational data where causation is more arduous to verify. In order to test for possible endogeneity, I have conducted a series of cross-lagged structural equation models. Similar to Granger causality in time-series work, cross-lagged structural equation models are often used to identify in which direction a reciprocal, causal relationship is strongest (Finkel 1995; Goren 2005; Carsey and Layman 2006; Highton and Kam 2011). These models will help to identify if protests between times  $t-1$  and  $t$  “cause” political interest in time  $t$  more so than political interest between times  $t-1$  and  $t$  “cause” protests in time  $t$ . Figure 6.3 illustrates the overidentified causal model as it is estimated here. I run the models for *Political Interest* and *Persuasion* because they are available for all three waves of data collection. Restricting the analysis to individuals who responded to all three waves of the survey, I estimate these models for each type of protest (calculated as the difference in protests between each individual interview date) and use robust standard errors clustered by municipality.

**Figure 6.3:**  
**Cross-Lagged Structural Equation Model of Political Engagement**



Tables 6.5 and 6.6 provide a summary of the results from these models.<sup>32</sup> A number of observations stand out. First, I will discuss the results for *Political Interest*. There is far more evidence of a causal effect from protests to interest than the reverse. In the three-wave models, there is a positive and significant relationship from pooled demonstrations, non-violent demonstrations, and small/medium demonstrations in wave 2 to interest in wave 3, and there is a negative and significant relationship from broadly framed demonstrations in wave 1 to interest in wave 2. A second observation relates to the timing of protest effects, which can be observed by comparing the March-August effects to those in August-November. A critical difference between these two time periods is the July election. I find that it is more likely that protests will generate increases in engagement after elections have taken place, rather than before. In the run-up to the

<sup>32</sup> Full output may be found in Appendix D.



elections in July, it is unlikely that protests could stand out from the bombardment of political activities and the debates taking place. However, they may have a stronger, more positive impact in the aftermath of an election or possibly in non-election years. The final observation I will discuss refers to the difference between the two-wave and three-wave models. The fact that the difference between protests from wave 3 to wave 1 does not have an independent effect on interest in wave 3 suggests that the lasting impact of protests is limited. As one might expect, early protests are not likely to maintain interest in politics for the entire calendar year.

**Table 6.5:**

<b>Structural Equation Model of Political Interest and Demonstrations</b>			
<b>Structural Coefficients:</b>	<b>3 Wave Estimates</b>		<b>2 Wave Estimates</b>
	<b>March-August</b>	<b>August-November</b>	<b>March - November</b>
<b>Interest --&gt; Demonstrations</b>	-0.095	-0.151	-0.065
	-0.175	-0.175	-0.057
<b>Demonstrations --&gt; Interest</b>	-0.007	0.008+	0.005
	-0.007	-0.005	-0.009
<b>Interest --&gt; Violent Protests</b>	-0.034	-0.005	0.004
	-0.036	-0.034	-0.017
<b>Violent Protests --&gt; Interest</b>	-0.049	0.025	-0.015
	-0.032	-0.057	-0.039
<b>Interest --&gt; Non-Violent Protests</b>	-0.130	-0.093	-0.083
	-0.150	-0.130	-0.070
<b>Non-Violent Protests --&gt; Interest</b>	-0.008	0.007+	0.006
	-0.008	-0.004	-0.010
<i>Big Protests Omitted for Lack of Observations</i>			
<b>Interest --&gt; Not-Big Protests</b>	-0.093	-0.149	-0.082
	-0.149	-0.176	-0.053
<b>Not-Big Protests --&gt; Interest</b>	-0.007	0.008+	0.006
	-0.008	-0.005	-0.009

As with all previous models, political persuasion is a different animal from the other forms of engagement. While this variable did not show significant effects for the multivariate analyses, the structural-equation models tell a different story. In these models, protests have consistent effects on political persuasion. The effect, however, is consistently negative. Every coefficient

from protest to persuasion is significant and in the negative direction in the three-wave models. For some models, the effects are quite strong in magnitude, particularly for violent protests. These negative effects are even significant in the two-wave model. That is, protests from early in the year make you less likely to try and persuade people of your political opinions as late as November.

Also dissimilar from the interest models, the persuasion models show some evidence for the opposite direction from persuasion to protest in the three-wave models. That is, a city with a more people attempting to persuade one another in the second wave generates protest in the third wave. This effect is significant for total protests and for small protests, and it is of greater magnitude than the reverse effect. This provides some evidence for endogeneity in the persuasion models.

**Table 6.6:**

<b>Structural Equation Model of Interpersonal Persuasion and Demonstrations</b>			
<b>Structural Coefficients:</b>	<b>3 Wave Estimates</b>		<b>2 Wave Estimates</b>
	<b>March- August</b>	<b>August - November</b>	<b>March - November</b>
<b>Persuade --&gt; Demonstrations</b>	-0.055 (0.205)	0.057+ (0.032)	0.076 (0.060)
<b>Demonstrations --&gt; Persuade</b>	0.001 (0.004)	-0.012+ (0.006)	-0.011* (0.005)
<b>Persuade --&gt; Violent Protests</b>	-0.024 (0.028)	0.004 (0.005)	0.015 (0.021)
<b>Violent Protests --&gt; Persuade</b>	0.012 (0.018)	-0.215+ (0.113)	-0.070*** (0.015)
<b>Persuade --&gt; Non-Violent Protests</b>	-0.216 (0.262)	0.042 (0.030)	0.062 (0.071)
<b>Non-Violent Protests --&gt; Persuade</b>	0.001 (0.005)	-0.010* (0.005)	-0.013* (0.006)
<i>Big Protests Omitted for Lack of Observations</i>			
<b>Persuade --&gt; Not-Big Protests</b>	-0.099 (0.185)	0.056+ (0.031)	0.042 (0.062)
<b>Not-Big Protests --&gt; Persuade</b>	0.001 (0.004)	-0.012+ (0.006)	-0.011* (0.005)

What is so distinct about political persuasion? Why does it behave so differently from the other engagement indicators? Persuasion, unlike every other dependent in the experiment and multi-level models, requires the respondent to personally engage with someone who disagrees with them. Even protest participation, a confrontational activity, involves personal interaction with fellow protesters who, presumably, agree with you. In this way, the persuasion variable is much closer to the conflict-seeking indicator from the mediation analysis. They resemble one another in both theory and empirics. Theoretically, both involve actively seeking some network heterogeneity and political debate, and in the models they both show some capacity to be driven by protest. In the experiment, the small, violent protest treatment decreased respondents' willingness to seek out political debate, and in the structural-equation model the negative effects were ubiquitous. Indeed, they were notably strong for the violent protests, which is consistent with the theory on conflict aversion. The structural equation model also suggests that the relationship with protest runs in both directions, suggesting that this variable more closely resembles a mediator than an outcome variable.

## **6.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This chapter found substantial evidence that the experimental results are not limited to the case of protests in Mexico City. Using a comprehensive data set on a wide variety of protests in 60 Brazilian municipalities, I find evidence for the most important findings from Chapter 4. That is, protests that are more likely to result in physical confrontations generate broad disengagement among their communities, and media-reported protests that are unlikely to be confronted yield community-wide political engagement. Because I rely on observational data and cannot verify

exposure, I operationalize the probability of exposure in two ways: protest characteristics that demand more attention and the size of the respondents' city.

The vast majority of the results in this chapter confirm the expectations generated by the experiments. There is only one exception: respondents' willingness to persuade others of his political beliefs is entirely unlike the other engagement indicators. Interest in politics and willingness to vote in national and state elections look very similar to indicators used in the experiment, but persuasion does not. I argue that, even though I had included persuasion as a proxy for deliberative engagement, it more closely represents the conflict aversion mechanism from the experiment. The structural equation models show that it is highly endogenous with engagement, suggesting that it operates as a mediator, and it is especially increased by violent protests.

One of the most important conclusions to draw from this chapter is the apparently important effect of protest characteristics that emerges in this analysis. In this observational analysis, protest characteristics help to identify the heterogeneous effects of protests, but they are only trivial in the experimental analysis that isolates the effects of exposure and characteristics. In a way, this is a manifestation of the ecological fallacy. From the aggregate perspective, phenomena look deceptively different than they do from the ground-level. Had it not been for the careful experimental design, the conclusions one would draw from the observational analysis would be very different and, ultimately, misleading. These findings provide additional fodder for the claim that complex questions require complex research designs with multiple methods. The two experimental designs generate highly divergent findings, and the survey analysis generated highly divergent findings from the experiments. The causal story only takes shape when these methods interlock.

## **7.0 PROTEST AS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND LESSONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

For many, activism can be a frustrating enterprise. Regardless of an activist's personal dedication to her cause, the resources at her disposal, and her desire to change the status quo, the success of collective action necessarily depends on other people. Of course, the protest's outcome depends on other activists. But what is the point of an increasingly large protest if the public ignores it? What leverage does a protest have against elected officials if it represents an isolated group? Or if the public is entirely unaware of the relevant issues? For better or worse, protesters often rely on the public audience, whose support can apply formidable pressure on elected officials and whose debates can shift the political agenda.

The public can be an ally or an obstacle for protesters, yet its role as an audience has largely been ignored in academic research. This dissertation is the first empirical research to address how protests can engage or disengage the public audience. I find that protest can act as a double-edged sword. News of protest activity can engage people in political issues and even inspire them to take action, but those same people can disengage when confronted with real protests. Encountering a protest indirectly or through the media can have a contagious effect on political engagement. However, the real-life disruption that protests cause can have a counter-productive outcome. Taken at face value, these findings represent a trade-off for protesters. On the one hand, a wide audience is necessary to spread a message and pose a credible threat to the status quo. On the other hand,

the strategies available to protesters – disruption, confrontation, civil disobedience, or even violence – may drive away that audience.

## **7.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The dissertation begins by discussing of the importance of the public audience for protesters. A brief review of the literature indicates that public engagement represents a *black box* for protest success. Protests that hold the attention of the audience and who earn their support tend to be more successful, but the causal mechanism is very difficult to prove. I then develop a theory to explain why protests might increase political engagement among the general public. It is well-established that protest participation can further engagement among activists, but it is not obvious that these results pertain to non-participants as well. Research on the contagion of participation suggests that they might, but traditional methodological approaches have presented significant limitations.

I argue that the audience is a heterogeneous actor whose reaction to protest will depend heavily on the medium by which they encounter the event. Individuals who are exposed to protests by the media receive an easy-to-follow cue about the importance of specific issues and the norms of engagement among their peers. These individuals learn from and feed off of the act of mobilization. Meanwhile, individuals who are exposed to protests in real life are inconvenienced by the disruption and confusion of the protest event. Unlike protesters who gain “selective incentives” from this event, I argue that non-participants will prefer to avoid the confrontation and will become less interested in political action.

To fully understand this dilemma, I designed a mixed-methods empirical approach. A vignette experiment addresses the effect of media exposure to protests, a quasi-experiment in the field pushes these same questions onto real-life protest exposure, and an analysis of observational protest data from Brazil probes the generalizability of these findings. The experiments are conducted in Mexico City, and the treatments piggyback off of real protests that arose in opposition to the apparent killing of 43 student teachers from the Ayotzinapa teachers' college in Iguala. I find that the two experiments yield widely different results. Many treatments in the vignette experiment increased political engagement among respondents, but the opposite took place in the field experiment. I analyze the experimental data with selection models and find it unlikely that these contrasting outcomes are a result of selection bias among compliers. For the vignette experiment, I find some evidence that the effects of the protest are conditional on the individual's personal support for the protest.

I then investigate the causal relationship by examining three causal mechanisms that might link protests to political engagement among the public - emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy. I analyze the causal arrow sequentially, first demonstrating the effect of the treatments on the mediators, then the mediators on the outcomes, and then the indirect causal effects of the treatments on the outcomes through the mediators. I find fairly weak evidence for most of the causal processes, but most of the evidence supports the emotional mechanism. There is also some weak but theoretically compelling evidence for the conflict mechanism. Although few treatments have significant effects on conflict aversion, I find that the desire to avoid political conflict has strong potential to drive disengagement. I also find that individuals who enjoy conflict are more likely to engage through this mechanism.

I then extend the findings from Mexico City to 60 randomly-sampled Brazilian municipalities. I argue that Brazil is the ideal case to test the generalizability of the experimental results. Modifying the causal expectations to accommodate observational data, I merge individual data from a longitudinal survey in Brazil with original data on protests from sampled municipalities. I find that the most confrontational protests – large and violent protests, and protests in small cities - lead to disengagement. Meanwhile, protests that are reported in the media but are unlikely to result in physical confrontations increase engagement among the community.

In all, some principle findings of the dissertation were consistent with expectations, though others were not. I strongly suspected that exposure to real protests would yield negative effects but that media exposure would paint a rosier picture. This expectation drove the two-pronged experimental design. However, it was surprising that the characteristics of the protests had so little influence on the treatment effects. After all, extant research does find that the characteristics of protests and protest groups are important determinants of the movement's success and failure. In a similar vein, I did not expect the protest treatments to drive emotional reactions with such a higher magnitude than the other mediators. The utter ineffectiveness of the other mediators, particularly political efficacy, was puzzling. Despite its importance for rational choice and threshold models, efficacy did not result in any significant mediation effects in the experiments and showed a negative effect on engagement in the Brazil models.

## **7.2 FUTURE AVENUES OF RESEARCH**

Future research will be necessary to delineate the scope of these findings and to draw more definitive conclusions. The most obvious avenue for future research is replication in new and



theoretically relevant cases. As discussed in Section 3.1, the geographic and thematic cases selected offer a number of advantages and disadvantages for generalizability. It will be important to conduct the study in a new environment where protests are less frequent, participation is more institutionalized, and where the issue at hand is more controversial. In a new case, some of the more counter-intuitive findings, such as the negative or null effects of efficacy, might appear more coherent. To be sure, an added benefit of replication would be a second-chance to attract more compliers to the field experiment. Many of the hypotheses remained untested in the field for the low number of observations. Hopefully, future research could more efficiently compare the findings from the phone and field samples.

But research on this topic must extend beyond the experimental design used in this dissertation. Indeed, this design did not perform well in the measurement and identification of causal mechanisms. Emotions, conflict aversion, and political efficacy are challenging variables to measure and manipulate in an as cumbersome a context as a field experiment. It may be extremely valuable to move some of these hypotheses and gaps into the lab. Lab experiments provide a great deal more control over confounders and allow for much more precise tests of causality. This added control would be particularly useful to explore the moderators and mediators of protest effects. Furthermore, the lab setting would be ideal for testing additional mechanisms that I could not address in this dissertation. Such mechanisms might include identification with the protest group and salience of the protest message.

This is not to say that later work should abandon the real-life experience of protests. Indeed, it is important to assess the face validity of the field experiment findings in a non-experimental or quasi-experimental setting. A systematic analysis of protest bystanders would be a valued contribution to the literature on protests. This might involve interviews, observations, surveys, or

even lab-in-the-field experiments around a wide variety of protest sites. It would then be interesting to compare these observations with comparable data from control sites or non-protest events.

### **7.3 WHY BOTHER? THE VALUE OF STUDYING REAL PROTESTS AND PROTEST EFFECTS**

Even though this research is methodologically and practically taxing, it is important that scholars of protest base their expectations and research designs on *real* protests. Research in this area would prove valuable to the existing literature. Protest research in comparative politics and international relations is often forced to conflate protest events with protest coverage. Beyond the bias and underreporting issues discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, researchers using this approach miss a portion of reality. They are forced to reduce the protest to a very narrow and subjective description of the event, and they do not have the opportunity to interpret for themselves the cacophony of messages and voices. Observational records of real protests would give researchers much greater leverage over the diversity of protest behaviors, contexts, motivations, and outcomes.

My dissertation's focus on real protests makes several ancillary contributions. First, I was able to observe outcomes that are rarely, if ever, described in reports on protests. Much of the literature on protests focuses on theories and mechanisms that reflect journalistic accounts, either because these are the frames that seem most plausible or because of the limitations of observational data. Designing the methodological approach so that it would capture variables that would otherwise go unnoticed can lead to a number of counter-intuitive conclusions. In particular, my design made it possible to measure outcomes that are generally unrelated to protesters' initial goals but have significant implications for the movement's success or failure. Also, this dissertation

attempted to explain actual behavior, rather than self-reported behavioral intentions. Such explanations are only possible in an actual field setting.

While greater attention to real protests might generally help researchers formulate more concrete lessons for activists, I found little that could be interpreted as practical advice for protest organizers attempting to maximize engagement. On the contrary, I conclude that protesters have little power to influence the public audience. The strategies at their disposal and the techniques that give them leverage with policymakers appear to have counterproductive effects on the public. Changes in protest techniques have no measurable impact on the direction of the effect. Future research can attempt to do more in identifying real solutions to these tradeoffs.

## **7.4 REFLECTIONS ON FIELDWORK**

Because the importance of mixed methods and multiple treatments is a recurring theme throughout this dissertation, I will conclude by reflecting on the challenges of doing this kind of work. Independent of the empirical findings, the fieldwork behind this dissertation proved to be a learning experience in its own right. Individual-level field experiments such as this one tend to be conducted in the United States, and the transition into a highly urban, Latin American environment demanded a number of adjustments. While it seems fairly straightforward to convince a random sample of Americans that they are participating in a legitimate, academic study and will be compensated as promised, it was difficult to convince a random sample of respondents in Mexico City. Although a number of precautions were taken in the survey script to persuade the respondents of the project's legitimacy, respondents were very reluctant – even afraid - to provide contact

information or attend the face-to-face interview. Many respondents refused to believe that this was not a trap and that we were not attempting to rob them.

Deciding compensation was notably challenging in this context. Offering respondents too little money proved disastrous in pilot tests, where few respondents arrived for follow-up interviews. The alternative, offering too much money, was equally problematic, as respondents lost trust in the process and felt incredulous. To further complicate matters, financial incentives are common in Mexican political campaigns, and some incentives (particularly grocery certificates) led respondents to believe that we were affiliated with a political party.

Finally, while I encourage further field-based research on protests, it is important to respect the limitations of experimenting with social movements. Protests are always, to some extent, unpredictable. Movements fade in and out, activists inevitably face collective action problems, and details such as routes and schedules can change on a moment's notice. The most predictable protests, like Gay Pride marches, are rarely contentious, demand-making events. Researchers should consider conducting fieldwork in countries where protesters register in advance.<sup>33</sup> While these registrars may change the context of the protest by making it more procedural or even repressed, they may be valuable tools for researchers.

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<sup>33</sup> Technically, Mexico has such a registrar, but it is not required or enforced.

## **APPENDIX A.1: SURVEY INSTRUMENT – CONTROL VERSION (SPANISH)**

Buenos días/tardes: Mi nombre es [nombre] hablo de BELTRAN Y ASOCIADOS a nombre de investigadores de la Universidad de Pittsburg de Estados Unidos. Actualmente realizan en nuestro país un estudio académico internacional sobre temas de participación ciudadana. Todas sus respuestas son anónimas y sólo se utilizarán para fines estadísticos. El estudio se realiza en dos etapas y le tomará unos minutos responder la primera. ¿Me puede responder unas preguntas? (**Encuestador si preguntan tiempo responder aproximadamente 8 minutos**) La segunda etapa es una entrevista a profundidad que le precisaremos al final. Si tiene dudas puede comunicarse con los responsables del proyecto Leticia Juárez o Roberto Gómez al 52113044. Gracias.

**Sexo:** registrar sin preguntar  
(1) Masculino (2) Femenino

**Edad:** Me podría decir ¿Cuántos años cumplidos tiene usted?

Nc (99)

**3.** En una escala de 1 a 4 (donde 1 significa *muy probable* y 4 significa *muy poco probable*), qué tan probable es que, en las próximas dos semanas usted... (**Encuestador leer cada opción, si es necesario repita la escala**):

	Muy Probable			Muy poco probable	Ns	Nc
a) Hable con amigos y/o familia sobre política	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
b) Lea sobre política en el periódico	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
c) Contacte a un político	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
d) Firme una carta para demandar algo al gobierno	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
e) Participe en alguna movilización	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

**4.** Y dígame, en la misma escala donde 1 significa *muy probable* y 4 *muy poco probable* ¿qué tan probable es que usted vote en las elecciones del próximo 7 de junio?

Muy Probable			Muy poco probable	Ns	Nc
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

5. Dígame, ¿qué tanto le interesa a usted la política? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Mucho
- (3) Bastante
- (2) Poco
- (1) Nada
- (99)Nc

6. En general, ¿cómo evalúa usted el desempeño del presidente Enrique Peña Nieto?

**[Leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Muy Bueno
- (3) Bueno
- (2) Malo
- (1) Muy Malo
- (99) Nc

7. Independientemente del partido por el que usted vota ¿normalmente se considera panista, priísta, perredista o se identifica con otro partido?

- (1) Panista'
- (2) Priísta'
- (3) Perredista'
- (4) Se identifica con otro partido **pase a 7\_1**
- (5) No se identifica con ningún partido'
- (6) NS'
- (99) NC'

7\_1. ¿Con cuál se identifica?

- (1) Partido Verde Ecologista'
- (2) Partido del Trabajo'
- (3) Movimiento Ciudadano (Convergencia)'
- (4) MORENA'
- (5) Partido Nueva Alianza'
- (6) Partido Encuentro Social'
- (7) Partido Humanista'
- (98) Ns
- (99)/Nc

8. Aproximadamente, ¿cuántas manifestaciones ha presenciado *personalmente* desde que comenzó este año? **(Encuestador leer opciones)**

- (4) 0-1 manifestación
- (3) 2-5 manifestaciones
- (2) 6-10 manifestaciones
- (1) + de 10 manifestaciones
- (99) Nc

9. Dígame ¿en los últimos cinco años ha participado en alguna manifestación o no?

- (1) Sí
- (2) no
- (99)Nc

10. ¿A usted le gusta discutir sobre política con personas que no están necesariamente de acuerdo con usted o no?

- (1) Sí
- (2) no
- (99)Nc

11.-**Control Vignette:** Ahora por favor le pido que escuche con atención lo siguiente y me responda más adelante....

**En una encuesta publicada recientemente, se registra que la mayoría de los ciudadanos está cansada de la violencia en el país y no hay acuerdo sobre quienes son los responsables de la violencia y de qué hay que hacer para logra la paz. La encuesta realizada tras los lamentables hechos ocurridos en Iguala (Guerrero) busca entender qué piensan los mexicanos sobre la violencia desatada por el crimen organizado y cuál es la posición de los ciudadanos para enfrentarla.**

Ahora, imagine que usted escucha en las noticias información sobre la violencias desatada en el país dígame al conocer estas noticias sobre la violencia ¿ en una escala de 1 a 4, donde 1 es **Nada** y 4 es **Muy/mucho**, usted se sentiría...(leer cada opción y esperar respuesta, si es necesario repita la escala **No leer las etiquetas de la escala**):

	Nada	Poco	Bastante	Muy/Mucho	Ns	Nc
a. Nervioso/a o inseguro/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
b. Entusiasmado/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
c. Frustrado/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
d.Orgulloso/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

12.- En general, ¿qué tanto se identifica usted con las demandas de las organizaciones que protestan en México contra la violencia que ocurre en el país? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Mucho
- (3) Bastante
- (2) Poco
- (1) Nada
- (99)Nc

13.- Ahora dígame ¿Qué tanto sabe o se siente informado sobre los acontecimientos políticos que ocurren en México? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Muy informado
- (3) Algo informado
- (2) Poco informado
- (1) Nada informado
- (99)Nc

14.- Y,¿Qué tan preocupado/a se siente por la violencia en México? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Muy preocupado/a
- (3) Preocupado/a
- (2) Un poco preocupado/a
- (1) Nada preocupado/a
- (99) Nc

**15.-** Como seguramente usted sabe, existe un debate sobre las razones de la violencia generada por el crimen organizado en México. Algunos movimientos estudiantiles y otras organizaciones sostienen que **el Gobierno Federal es responsable de la escalada de violencia**, mientras que otras agrupaciones creen que **la violencia es un asunto local debido a la complicidad y corrupción entre las autoridades y miembros del crimen organizado**. Sin importar su postura en este debate, ¿qué tan probable es que usted discuta sobre estos temas con personas que no están de acuerdo con usted?

- (4) Muy probable
- (3) Probable
- (2) Poco probable
- (1) Nada probable
- (99) Nc

**16.-** En una escala de 1-4 (donde 1 significa que **no está nada de acuerdo** y 4 significa que está **muy de acuerdo**) ¿qué tan de acuerdo está con las siguientes afirmaciones:

	Nada de Acuerdo			Muy de acuerdo	Ns	Nc
<b>a)</b> La gente como yo tiene voz en las discusiones políticas en México.	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>b)</b> Las movilizaciones contra la violencia para bien ó para mal, tienen capacidad de transformar la política en México	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>c)</b> Los movimientos sociales generalmente tienen una voz poderosa que influye en la política mexicana	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>d)</b> A los políticos mexicanos les importa lo que piensa el pueblo.	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)

**17.** Con la información que reporta la encuesta que le mencioné antes sobre la violencia que ocurre en el país, en una escala donde 1 significa **muy probable** y 4 **muy poco probable**, que tan probable es que usted **...(leer cada opción)**

	Muy Probable			Muy poco probable	Ns	Nc
<b>a)</b> Hable con amigos y/o miembros de su familia sobre la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>b)</b> Lea en los periódicos sobre la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>c)</b> Firme una carta para exigir al gobierno mayor compromiso y acción para disminuir la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)



Y en la misma escala donde 1 significa **muy probable** y 4 **muy poco probable**, que tan probable es que usted ...**(leer cada opcion)**

**d)** Contacte a un político para discutir el tema de la violencia generada por el crimen organizado (1) (2) (3) (4) (98) (99)

**e)** Participe en una movilización contra la violencia generada por el crimen organizado (1) (2) (3) (4) (98) (99)

**f)** En las próximas elecciones del 7 de junio vote por un candidato que coincida con la postura que usted tiene sobre la violencia generada por el crimen organizado (1) (2) (3) (4) (98) (99)

**18.** ¿usted conoce personalmente a alguna persona que haya sido víctima de la violencia generada por el crimen organizado?

- (1) Sí
- (2) no
- (99) Nc

**19.** Ahora me podría decir ¿hasta qué año escolar estudió usted?

- (1) Ninguno
- (2) Primaria incompleta
- (3) Primaria completa
- (4) Secundaria Incompleta
- (5) Secundaria completa
- (6) Preparatoria o equivalente
- (7) Preparatoria completa o equivalente
- (8) Universidad incompleta
- (9) Universidad completa
- (10) Postgrado /Maestria /Doctorado
- (11) NC

**20.-** Le voy a leer una lista de aparatos que son comunes en las casas habitación, dígame para cada uno si usted tiene o no en su casa...**(leer opciones)**

	Sí mención	No mención
(1) Refrigerador/nevera	(1)	(2)
(2) Computadora	(1)	(2)
(3) Lavadora de ropa	(1)	(2)
(4) Sistema de Audio	(1)	(2)
(5) Televisión de paga o cable	(1)	(2)
(6) Televisor	(1)	(2)
(7) Radio	(1)	(2)
(8) Teléfono Celular	(1)	(2)
(9) IpadRadio	(1)	(2)
(10) Automovil	(1)	(2)

**Como comenté al inicio, los investigadores de Pittsburg** requieren su opinión en una segunda etapa que consiste en responder una entrevista personal de ocho minutos el próximo domingo 26 de abril en **el Starbucks Reforma Capital** (Paseo de la Reforma 250 esquina con Niza). Necesitamos que asista entre las cuatro y las seis de la tarde, donde personal de Beltrán y Asociados plenamente identificado lo recibirá con un café y le compensará su tiempo y disposición a participar con una tarjeta de regalo de Liverpool de \$500 pesos. **No se trata de venderle nada.** La Universidad, de Pittsburg le hará llegar, también, un reconocimiento por su participación. ¿Nos podría apoyar nuevamente con sus opiniones y llegar el domingo 26 al lugar y hora de la cita? (le repito la dirección **Starbucks Reforma Capital** (Paseo de la Reforma 250 esquina con Niza))

**Sí (1)** ¿Me podría decir cuál es su nombre de pila o correo electrónico o celular para recordarle el viernes o sábado de nuestra cita?

NOMBRE (A): \_\_\_\_\_ (El nombre de pila es muy importante)

Correo electrónico \_\_\_\_\_

Celular \_\_\_\_\_ (Estar atento a suspicacia si no lo quiere proporcionar no insistir.)

**Si no proporcionan correo electrónico ni celular,**

Dígame ¿Cuál es la mejor hora para recordarle la cita en su vivienda?

Registrar respuesta espontánea)

\_\_\_\_\_

Nc

**No (2)** Tenemos que registrar las razones por las que no puede apoyarnos en la segunda etapa nos indica ¿Porque no puede asistir?

Registrar respuesta espontánea

\_\_\_\_\_

Nc

**A nombre de la Universidad de Pittsburg y de Beltrán y Asociados, Muchísimas gracias por tomar el tiempo para hacer la encuesta telefónica. Qué tenga un buen día.**

Para cualquier duda o pregunta puede comunicarse con la coordinadora del proyecto, Cassilde Schwartz al correo electrónico ([movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com](mailto:movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com)) o bien con los responsables del estudio Leticia Juárez o Roberto Gómez al 52113044.

## **APPENDIX A.2: SURVEY INSTRUMENT – TREATMENT VERSION (SPANISH)**

Buenos días/tardes: Mi nombre es [nombre] hablo de BELTRAN Y ASOCIADOS a nombre de investigadores de la Universidad de Pittsburg de Estados Unidos. Actualmente realizan en nuestro país un estudio académico internacional sobre temas de participación ciudadana. Todas sus respuestas son anónimas y sólo se utilizarán para fines estadísticos. El estudio se realiza en dos etapas y le tomará unos minutos responder la primera. ¿Me puede responder unas preguntas? (**encuestador si preguntan tiempo responder aproximadamente 8 minutos**) La segunda etapa es una entrevista a profundidad que le precisaremos al final. Si tiene dudas puede comunicarse con los responsables del proyecto Leticia Juárez o Roberto Gómez al 52113044. Gracias.

**Sexo:** registrar sin preguntar  
(1) Masculino (2) Femenino

**Edad:** Me podría decir ¿Cuántos años cumplidos tiene usted?

Nc (99)

**3.** En una escala de 1 a 4 (donde 1 significa *muy probable* y 4 significa *muy poco probable*), qué tan probable es que, en las próximas dos semanas usted... (**encuestador leer cada opción, si es necesario repita la escala**):

	Muy Probable		Muy poco probable	Ns	Nc
a) Hable con amigos y/o familia sobre política	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98) (99)
b) Lea sobre política en el periódico	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98) (99)
c) Contacte a un político	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98) (99)
d) Firme una carta para demandar algo al gobierno	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98) (99)
e) Participe en alguna movilización	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98) (99)

4. Y dígame, en la misma escala donde 1 significa ***muy probable*** y 4 ***muy poco probable*** ¿qué tan probable es que usted vote en las elecciones del próximo 7 de junio?

<b>Muy Probable</b>			<b>Muy poco probable</b>	<b>Ns</b>	<b>Nc</b>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

5. Dígame, ¿qué tanto le interesa a usted la política? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Mucho
- (3) Bastante
- (2) Poco
- (1) Nada
- (99)Nc

6. En general, ¿cómo evalúa usted el desempeño del presidente Enrique Peña Nieto?

**[Leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Muy Bueno
- (3) Bueno
- (2) Malo
- (1) Muy Malo
- (99) Nc

7. Independientemente del partido por el que usted vota ¿normalmente se considera panista, priísta, perredista o se identifica con otro partido?

- (1) Panista
- (2) Priísta
- (3) Perredista
- (4) Se identifica con otro partido **pase a 7\_1**
- (5) No se identifica con ningún partido
- (6) NS
- (99) NC'

**7\_1.** ¿Con cuál se identifica?

- (1) Partido Verde Ecologista
- (2) Partido del Trabajo
- (3) Movimiento Ciudadano (Convergencia)
- (4) MORENA
- (5) Partido Nueva Alianza
- (6) Partido Encuentro Social
- (7) Partido Humanista
- (98) Ns
- (99)/Nc

8. Aproximadamente, ¿cuántas manifestaciones ha presenciado *personalmente* desde que comenzó este año? **(Encuestador leer opciones)**

- (4) 0-1 manifestación
- (3) 2-5 manifestaciones
- (2) 6-10 manifestaciones
- (1) + de 10 manifestaciones
- (99) Nc

9. Dígame ¿en los últimos cinco años ha participado en alguna manifestación o no?

- (1) Sí
- (2) No
- (99)Nc

10. ¿A usted le gusta discutir sobre política con personas que no están necesariamente de acuerdo con usted o no?

- (1) Sí
- (2) No
- (99)Nc

11.-Texto 1 (**Pacífica + pequeña**): Ahora por favor le pido que escuche con atención lo siguiente y me responda más adelante....

Recientemente en la Ciudad de México, un pequeño grupo de estudiantes y personas de distintas organizaciones civiles marcharon con velas del Paseo de la Reforma al Zócalo para exigir que el Gobierno Federal ponga fin a la violencia y combata la corrupción asociada a los carteles del narcotráfico. Al recordar lo que pasó a los normalistas en Ayotzinapa, manifestantes sostienen que seguirán marchando hasta que haya paz y justicia en el país. Algunos califican lo que ocurrió a los normalistas como un crimen en el que participó el Gobierno; otros manifiestan que marchan por estar cansados de la violencia en México. Esta movilización de un grupo pequeño con velas encendidas y la esperanza de que cese la violencia en el país, interrumpió el tráfico, detuvo la circulación varias horas en el Centro de la ciudad y terminó pacíficamente

11.-Texto 1 (**Pacífica + gran Tamaño**): Ahora por favor le pido que escuche con atención lo siguiente y me responda más adelante....

Recientemente en la Ciudad de México miles de estudiantes y personas de distintas organizaciones civiles marcharon con velas del Paseo de la Reforma al Zócalo para exigir que el Gobierno Federal ponga fin a la violencia y combata la corrupción asociada a los carteles del narcotráfico. Al recordar lo que pasó a los normalistas en Ayotzinapa, manifestantes sostienen que seguirán marchando hasta que haya paz y justicia en el país. Algunos califican lo que ocurrió a los normalistas como un crimen en el que participó el Gobierno; otros manifiestan que marchan por estar cansados de la violencia en México. Esta movilización de una multitud con velas encendidas y la esperanza de que cese la violencia en el país interrumpió el tráfico, detuvo la circulación varias horas en el Centro de la ciudad y terminó pacíficamente

11.-Texto 3 (**Conflicto + pequeña**): Ahora por favor le pido que escuche con atención lo siguiente y me responda más adelante....

Recientemente en la Ciudad de México, un pequeño grupo de estudiantes y personas de distintas organizaciones civiles marcharon con antorchas del Paseo de la Reforma al Zócalo para exigir que el Gobierno Federal ponga fin a la violencia y combata la corrupción asociada a los carteles del narcotráfico. Al recordar lo que pasó a los normalistas en Ayotzinapa, manifestantes sostienen que seguirán marchando hasta que haya paz y

justicia en el país. Algunos califican lo que ocurrió a los normalistas como un crimen en el que participó el Gobierno; otros manifiestan que marchan por estar cansados de la violencia en México. Esta marcha interrumpió el tráfico, detuvo la circulación varias horas en el Centro de la ciudad y terminó con enfrentamientos entre los manifestantes y la policía que usó gases lacrimógenos para dispersar a los manifestantes. Según los primeros reportes hay varios detenidos y otros más fueron trasladados a hospitales.

**11.-Texto 4 (Conflicto + gran tamaño):** Ahora por favor le pido que escuche con atención lo siguiente y me responda más adelante....

Recientemente en la Ciudad de México, miles de estudiantes y de personas de distintas organizaciones civiles marcharon con antorchas del Paseo de la Reforma al Zócalo para exigir que el Gobierno Federal ponga fin a la violencia y combata la corrupción asociada a los carteles del narcotráfico. Al recordar lo que pasó a los normalistas en Ayotzinapa, manifestantes sostienen que seguirán marchando hasta que haya paz y justicia en el país. Algunos califican lo que ocurrió a los normalistas como un crimen en el que participó el Gobierno; otros manifiestan que marchan por estar cansados de la violencia en México. Esta marcha interrumpió el tráfico, detuvo la circulación varias horas en el Centro de la ciudad, terminó en enfrentamientos entre los manifestantes y la policía que usó gases lacrimógenos y balas goma para dispersar a los manifestantes. Según los primeros reportes hay muchos detenidos y otros fueron trasladados a hospitales

Ahora, imagine que usted se encuentra con una manifestación como la que le acabo de describir mientras va caminando por el Centro de la ciudad., si usted presenciara esta marcha en una escala de 1 a 4, donde 1 es **nada** y 4 es **Muy/Mucho**, usted se sentiría... (leer cada opción y esperar respuesta, si es necesario repita la escala. **No leer las etiquetas de la escala**):

	Nada	Poco	Bastante	Muy/Mucho	Ns	Nc
a. Nervioso/a o inseguro/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
b. Entusiasmado/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
c. Frustrado/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
d. Orgulloso/a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

**12.-** En general, ¿qué tanto se identifica usted con las demandas de las organizaciones que protestan en México contra la violencia que ocurre en el país? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Mucho
- (3) Bastante
- (2) Poco
- (1) Nada
- (99)Nc

**13.-** Ahora dígame ¿Qué tanto sabe o se siente informado sobre los acontecimientos políticos que ocurren en México? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Muy informado
- (3) Bastante informado
- (2) Poco informado
- (1) Nada informado
- (99) Nc

**14.-** Y, ¿Qué tan preocupado/a se siente por la violencia en México? **[leer opciones 1 a 4]:**

- (4) Muy preocupado/a
- (3) Preocupado/a
- (2) Un poco preocupado/a
- (1) Nada preocupado/a
- (99) Nc

**15.-** Como seguramente usted sabe, existe un debate sobre las razones de la violencia generada por el crimen organizado en México. Algunos movimientos estudiantiles y otras organizaciones sostienen que **el Gobierno Federal es responsable de la escalada de violencia**, mientras que otras agrupaciones creen que **la violencia es un asunto local debido a la complicidad y corrupción entre las autoridades y miembros del crimen organizado**. Sin importar su postura en este debate, ¿qué tan probable es que usted discuta sobre estos temas con personas que no están de acuerdo con usted?

- (4) Muy probable
- (3) Probable
- (2) Poco probable
- (1) Nada probable
- (99) Nc

**16.-** En una escala de 1-4 (donde 1 significa que **no está nada de acuerdo** y 4 significa que está **muy de acuerdo**) ¿qué tan de acuerdo está con las siguientes afirmaciones...?

	Nada de Acuerdo			Muy de acuerdo	Ns	Nc
	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>e)</b> La gente como yo tiene voz en las discusiones políticas en México.						
<b>f)</b> Las movilizaciones contra la violencia para bien o para mal, tienen capacidad de transformar la política en México	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>g)</b> Los movimientos sociales generalmente tienen una voz poderosa que influye en la política mexicana	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>h)</b> A los políticos mexicanos les importa lo que piensa el pueblo.	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)

17. Las manifestaciones de protesta desatan distintas reacciones en las personas. Algunos las apoyan, otros simplemente las odian/rechazan. Si usted **se encuentra con una manifestación como la que le describí antes, es decir un pequeño grupo de personas que marchan con velas prendidas contra la violencia**, en la misma escala donde 1 significa **muy probable** y 4 **muy poco probable**, que tan probable es que usted ...**(leer cada opción)**

	Muy Probable			Muy poco probable		Ns	Nc
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)	
a) Hable con amigos y/o miembros de su familia sobre la violencia generada por el crimen organizado							
b) Lea en los periódicos sobre la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)	
c) Firme una carta para exigir al gobierno mayor compromiso y acción para disminuir la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)	

Y en la misma escala donde 1 significa **muy probable** y 4 **muy poco probable**, que tan probable es que usted... **(leer cada opción)**

d) Contacte a un político para discutir el tema de la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)	
e) Participe en una movilización contra la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)	
f) En las próximas elecciones del 7 de junio vote por un candidato que coincida con la postura que usted tiene sobre la violencia generada por el crimen organizado	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)	

18. ¿usted conoce personalmente a alguna persona que haya sido víctima de la violencia generada por el crimen organizado?

- (1) Sí
- (2) no
- (99)Nc

19. Ahora me podría decir ¿hasta qué año escolar estudió usted?

- (1) Ninguno
- (2) Primaria incompleta
- (3) Primaria completa
- (4) Secundaria Incompleta
- (5) Secundaria completa
- (6) Preparatoria o equivalente
- (7) Preparatoria completa o equivalente
- (8) Universidad incompleta
- (9) Universidad completa
- (10) Postgrado /Maestría /Doctorado
- (11) NC



**20.-** Le voy a leer una lista de aparatos que son comunes en las casas habitación, dígame para cada uno si usted tiene o no en su casa... **(leer opciones)**

	<b>Sí mención</b>	<b>No mención</b>
(1) Refrigerador/nevera	(1)	(2)
(2) Computadora	(1)	(2)
(3) Lavadora de ropa	(1)	(2)
(4) Sistema de Audio	(1)	(2)
(5) Televisión de paga o cable	(1)	(2)
(6) Televisor	(1)	(2)
(7) Radio	(1)	(2)
(8) Teléfono Celular	(1)	(2)
(9) IpadRadio	(1)	(2)
(10) Automovil	(1)	(2)

**Como comenté al inicio, los investigadores de Pittsburg** requieren su opinión en una segunda etapa que consiste en responder una entrevista personal de ocho minutos el próximo domingo 26 de abril en **el Starbucks Reforma Capital** (Paseo de la Reforma 250 esquina con Niza). Necesitamos que asista entre las cuatro y las seis de la tarde, donde personal de Beltrán y Asociados plenamente identificado lo recibirá con un café y le compensará su tiempo y disposición a participar con una tarjeta de regalo de Liverpool de \$500 pesos. **No se trata de venderle nada.** La Universidad, de Pittsburg le hará llegar, también, un reconocimiento por su participación. ¿Nos podría apoyar nuevamente con sus opiniones y llegar el domingo 26 al lugar y hora de la cita? (le repito la dirección **Starbucks Reforma Capital** (Paseo de la Reforma 250 esquina con Niza)

**Sí (1)** ¿Me podría decir cuál es su nombre de pila o correo electrónico o celular para recordarle el viernes o sábado de nuestra cita?

NOMBRE (A): \_\_\_\_\_ (El nombre de pila es muy importante)

Correo electrónico \_\_\_\_\_

Celular \_\_\_\_\_ (Estar atento a suspicacia si no lo quiere proporcionar no insistir.)

**Si no proporcionan correo electrónico ni celular,**

Dígame ¿Cuál es la mejor hora para recordarle la cita en su vivienda?

Registrar respuesta espontánea)

\_\_\_\_\_

Nc

**No (2)** Tenemos que registrar las razones por las que no puede apoyarnos en la segunda etapa nos indica ¿Porque no puede asistir?

Registrar respuesta espontánea

\_\_\_\_\_

Nc

**A nombre de la Universidad de Pittsburg y de Beltrán y Asociados, Muchísimas gracias por tomar el tiempo para hacer la encuesta telefónica. Qué tenga un buen día.**

Para cualquier duda o pregunta puede comunicarse con la coordinadora del proyecto, Cassilde Schwartz al correo electrónico ([movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com](mailto:movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com)) o bien con los responsables del estudio Leticia Juárez o Roberto Gómez al 52113044.

## **APPENDIX B.1: SURVEY INSTRUMENT – CONTROL VERSION (ENGLISH)**

Hello: My name is [name], and I am contacting you from BELTRAN Y ASOCIADOS on behalf of researchers from the University of Pittsburgh in the United States. We are conducting an international, academic study about political participation in Mexico. All of your answers are anonymous and will only be used for statistical analysis. The study will take place in two parts and will only take a few minutes to answer. Could you answer a few questions for me (**If the respondent asks how much time, answer approximately 8 minutes**). The second part of the study is a face-to-face interview that we'll explain at the end. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Leticia Juárez or Roberto Gómez at 52113044. Thank you.

**Sex:** record, do not ask  
(1) Male (2) Female

**Age:** How old are you?

NR (99)

**3.** On a scale of 1-4 (where 1 is very likely and 4 is very unlikely), how likely are you to do the following things in the next two weeks... (**Read each option, re-reading the scale if necessary**)

	Very Likely			Very Unlikely	DK	NR
a) Speak with Friends and family about politics	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
b) Read about politics in the news	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
c) Contact a politician	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
d) Sign a petition	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
e) Participate in a protest	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

**4.** And now, on the same scale where 1 means very likely and 4 means very unlikely, how likely are you to vote in the election on June 7th?

Very Likely			Very Unlikely	DK	NR
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

5. How interested are you in politics? **[read options 1-4]:**

- (4) Very
- (3) Quite
- (2) A little
- (1) Not at all
- (99) NR

6. In general, how would you rate the performance of President Enrique Peña Nieto? **[Read options 1-4]:**

- (4) Very good
- (3) Good
- (2) Poor
- (1) Very poor
- (99) NR

7. Regardless of which party you vote for, do you normally consider yourself a PAN-ista, PRI-ista, PRD-ista, or do you identify with some other party?

- (1) PAN
- (2) PRI
- (3) PRD
- (4) Other **go to 7\_1**
- (5) None
- (6) DK
- (99) NR

**7\_1.** Which party?

- (1) Partido Verde Ecologista
- (2) Partido del Trabajo
- (3) Movimiento Ciudadano (Convergencia)
- (4) MORENA
- (5) Partido Nueva Alianza
- (6) Partido Encuentro Social
- (7) Partido Humanista
- (98) DK
- (99)/NR

8. Approximately, how many protests have you personally seen since the beginning of the year? **(Read all options)**

- (4) 0-1 protest
- (3) 2-5 protests
- (2) 6-10 protests
- (1) + 10 protests
- (99) NR

9. Have you participated in a protest in the last five years?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (99) NR

**10.** Do you like to debate political issues with people who do not necessarily agree with you?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (99) NR

**11. Control Vignette:** Now I would like you to listen to the following report, and I will ask you some questions about it shortly afterwards.

A recently published survey shows that a majority of citizens are tired with the level of violence in the country, but there is some disagreement about who is responsible for the violence and what should be done to establish peace. The survey follows the unfortunate occurrences that took place in Iguala (Guerrero) and seeks to understand what Mexican citizens think about the violence from organized crime and what should be done about it.

Now, suppose that you heard this information about the political violence in Mexico while listening to the news. On a scale of 1-4, where 1 is not at all and 4 is very much, tell me if you feel the following after hearing this news (**repeat the scale of necessary**):

	Not at all	A little	Quite	Very much	DK	NR
a. Nervous or anxious	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
b. Enthusiastic or excited	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
c. Frustrated	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
d. Proud	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

**12.-** In general, how strongly do you identify with the protesters who march against the political violence in Mexico? En general, **[read options 1-4]**:

- (4) A lot
- (3) Quite
- (2) A little
- (1) Not at all
- (99) NR

**13.-** Now tell me, how much do you know or do you feel you know about the political events in Mexico? **[read options 1-4]**:

- (4) Very informed
- (3) Somewhat informed
- (2) A little informed
- (1) Not at all informed
- (99) NR

**14.-** How worried do you feel about the violence in Mexico? **[read options 1-4]**:

- (4) Very worried
- (3) Worried
- (2) A little worried
- (1) Not at all worried
- (99) NR

**15.-** As you surely know, there is some debate about the causes of political violence in Mexico. Some student movements and other organizations argue that the federal government is responsible for the increase in violence, while other groups believe that the violence is primarily a localized issue related to gangs and corruption at the local level. Regardless of your position, how likely are you to debate these issues with people who do not necessarily agree with you?

- (4) Very likely
- (3) Likely
- (2) A little likely
- (1) Not at all likely
- (99) NR

**16.-** On a scale of 1-4, where 1 means do not agree at all and 4 means completely agree, how strongly do you agree with the following statements:

	Do not agree at all			Completely agree	DK	NR
<b>i)</b> People like me have a voice in political discussions in Mexico	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>j)</b> For better or worse, the groups protesting organized violence are capable of changing things in Mexico	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>k)</b> In general, social movements have a powerful voice that can influence Mexican politics	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>l)</b> Politicians in Mexico care about what the public thinks	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)

**17.** On a scale of 1-4, where 1 is very likely and 4 is very unlikely, how likely are you to do the following regarding organized crime in Mexico? (*read each option*)

	<b>Muy Probable</b>		<b>Muy poco probable</b>		<b>Ns</b>	<b>Nc</b>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>a)</b> Speak with friends and/or family about organized crime						
<b>b)</b> Read news about organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>c)</b> Sign a petition demanding that the government take action against organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>d)</b> Contact a politician to address the topic of organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>e)</b> Participate in a protest against organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>f)</b> Vote for a candidate in the June 7th elections because of his position on organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

**18.** Do you personally know anyone who has been a victim of organized crime?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (99) NR

**19.** Now can you tell me the highest level of education you have achieved?

- (1) None
- (2) Primary (Incomplete)
- (3) Primary (Complete)
- (4) Secondary (Incomplete)
- (5) Secondary (Complete)
- (6) Preparatory (Incomplete)
- (7) Preparatory (Complete)
- (8) University (Incomplete)
- (9) University (Complete)
- (10) Post-Graduate
- (11) NR

**20.-** I'm going to read you a list of things that people often have in their homes. Please tell me if you have the following items in your home: **(read options)**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
(1) Refrigerator	(1)	(2)
(2) Computer	(1)	(2)
(3) Washing machine	(1)	(2)
(4) Speaker system	(1)	(2)
(5) Cable television	(1)	(2)
(6) TV	(1)	(2)
(7) Radio	(1)	(2)
(8) Cell Phone	(1)	(2)
(9) Ipad	(1)	(2)
(10) Car	(1)	(2)

**As I mentioned earlier, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh would like you to participate in a second part of the study. This part of the study will involve a face-to-face interview (approximately 8 minutes long) next Sunday, on April 26th, at the Starbucks on Reforma (Paseo de la Reforma 250 on the corner with Niza). We would need you to arrive between 4-6 pm, at which point a team of clearly-identifiable interviewers from Beltrán y Asociados will offer you a coffee and conduct the interview. All attending participants will receive a gift card worth \$500 MX for Liverpool. This is not a promotion to sell you anything. The University of Pittsburgh would appreciate your attendance and will offer you an acknowledgement of participation.**

**Would you be able to attend the interview on Sunday, April 26th, at Starbucks on Reforma?**

**Yes (1)** Could you tell me your first name and a cellphone number or email address where we can contact you with a reminder?

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**If they do not have a cell phone or email address**

Is there anyone else in your household I can contact to remind you about the interview?

Register their information

\_\_\_\_\_

NR

**No (2)** We would like to know why you would not like to attend

Register their answer

\_\_\_\_\_

NR

**On behalf of the University of Pittsburgh and Beltrán y Asociados, Thank you very much for taking the time to answer our survey. Have a good day.**

If you would like to ask any questions or raise any concerns, please contact the project coordinator, Cassilde Schwartz ([movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com](mailto:movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com)) or call Leticia Juárez or Roberto Gómez (52113044).

## **APPENDIX B.2: SURVEY INSTRUMENT – TREATMENT VERSION (ENGLISH)**

Hello: My name is [name], and I am contacting you from BELTRAN Y ASOCIADOS on behalf of researchers from the University of Pittsburgh in the United States. We are conducting an international, academic study about political participation in Mexico. All of your answers are anonymous and will only be used for statistical analysis. The study will take place in two parts and will only take a few minutes to answer. Could you answer a few questions for me (**If the respondent asks how much time, answer approximately 8 minutes**). The second part of the study is a face-to-face interview that we'll explain at the end. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Leticia Juárez or Roberto Gómez at 52113044. Thank you.

**Sex:** record, do not ask  
(1) Male (2) Female

**Age:** How old are you?

NR (99)

**3.** On a scale of 1-4 (where 1 is very likely and 4 is very unlikely), how likely are you to do the following things in the next two weeks... (**Read each option, re-reading the scale if necessary**)

	<b>Very Likely</b>		<b>Very Unlikely</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>NR</b>
a) Speak with Friends and family about politics	(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(98)	(99)
b) Read about politics in the news	(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(98)	(99)
c) Contact a politician	(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(98)	(99)
d) Sign a petition	(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(98)	(99)
e) Participate in a protest	(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(98)	(99)

**4.** And now, on the same scale where 1 means very likely and 4 means very unlikely, how likely are you to vote in the election on June 7th?

<b>Very Likely</b>		<b>Very Unlikely</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>NR</b>
(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(98)	(99)



5. How interested are you in politics? **[read options 1-4]:**

- (4) Very
- (3) Quite
- (2) A little
- (1) Not at all
- (99) NR

6. In general, how would you rate the performance of President Enrique Peña Nieto? **[Read options 1-4]:**

- (4) Very good
- (3) Good
- (2) Poor
- (1) Very poor
- (99) NR

7. Regardless of which party you vote for, do you normally consider yourself a PAN-ista, PRI-ista, PRD-ista, or do you identify with some other party?

- (1) PAN
- (2) PRI
- (3) PRD
- (4) Other **go to 7\_1**
- (5) None
- (6) DK
- (99) NR

**7\_1.** Which party?

- (1) Partido Verde Ecologista
- (2) Partido del Trabajo
- (3) Movimiento Ciudadano (Convergencia)
- (4) MORENA
- (5) Partido Nueva Alianza
- (6) Partido Encuentro Social
- (7) Partido Humanista
- (98) DK
- (99)/NR

8. Approximately, how many protests have you personally seen since the beginning of the year? **(Read all options)**

- (4) 0-1 protest
- (3) 2-5 protests
- (2) 6-10 protests
- (1) + 10 protests
- (99) NR

9. Have you participated in a protest in the last five years?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (99) NR

10. Do you like to debate political issues with people who do not necessarily agree with you?

(1) Yes

(2) No

(99) NR

### 11. Peaceful/Small Vignette:

Now I would like you to listen to the following report, and I will ask you some questions about it shortly afterwards.

Recently in Mexico City, **a small group of** students and people from different civil society organizations marched with **small candles** from the Paseo de la Reforma to the Zócalo to demand that the federal government put an end to the violence and corruption related to drug trafficking. In memory of the normalistas in Ayotzinapa, protesters stated that they would continue to march until there was peace and justice in Mexico. Some claimed that the government of Mexico was responsible for the crimes that took place; others marched simply because they were tired of the violence in Mexico. **The protest, a multitude of candles lit in the hope of ending violence, interrupted traffic routes. The march caused traffic jams for several hours in the city center and ultimately ended peacefully.**

### 11. Peaceful/Big Vignette:

Now I would like you to listen to the following report, and I will ask you some questions about it shortly afterwards.

Recently in Mexico City, **thousands of** students and people from different civil society organizations marched with **small candles** from the Paseo de la Reforma to the Zócalo to demand that the federal government put an end to the violence and corruption related to drug trafficking. In memory of the normalistas in Ayotzinapa, protesters stated that they would continue to march until there was peace and justice in Mexico. Some claimed that the government of Mexico was responsible for the crimes that took place; others marched simply because they were tired of the violence in Mexico. **The protest, a multitude of candles lit in the hope of ending violence, interrupted traffic routes. The march caused traffic jams for several hours in the city center and ultimately ended peacefully.**

### 11. Violent/Small Vignette:

Now I would like you to listen to the following report, and I will ask you some questions about it shortly afterwards.

Recently in Mexico City, **a small group of** students and people from different civil society organizations marched with **torches** from the Paseo de la Reforma to the Zócalo to demand that the federal government put an end to the violence and corruption related to drug trafficking. In memory of the normalistas in Ayotzinapa,

protesters stated that they would continue to march until there was peace and justice in Mexico. Some claimed that the government of Mexico was responsible for the crimes that took place; others marched simply because they were tired of the violence in Mexico. **The march interrupted traffic routes, causing traffic jams for several hours in the city center. The protest ended in clashes with the police, who used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the protesters. According to initial reports, several participants were arrested and others were brought to local hospitals.**

#### 11. Violent/Big Vignette:

Now I would like you to listen to the following report, and I will ask you some questions about it shortly afterwards.

Recently in Mexico City, **thousands of** students and people from different civil society organizations marched with **torches** from the Paseo de la Reforma to the Zócalo to demand that the federal government put an end to the violence and corruption related to drug trafficking. In memory of the normalistas in Ayotzinapa, protesters stated that they would continue to march until there was peace and justice in Mexico. Some claimed that the government of Mexico was responsible for the crimes that took place; others marched simply because they were tired of the violence in Mexico. **The march interrupted traffic routes, causing traffic jams for several hours in the city center. The protest ended in clashes with the police, who used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the protesters. According to initial reports, several participants were arrested and others were brought to local hospitals.**

Now, suppose that you heard this information about the political violence in Mexico while listening to the news. On a scale of 1-4, where 1 is not at all and 4 is very much, tell me if you feel the following after hearing this news (**repeat the scale of necessary**):

	Not at all	A little	Quite	Very much	DK	NR
a. Nervous or anxious	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
b. Enthusiastic or excited	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
c. Frustrated	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
d. Proud	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

12.- In general, how strongly do you identify with the protesters who march against the political violence in Mexico? En general, **[read options 1-4]**:

- (4) A lot
- (3) Quite
- (2) A little
- (1) Not at all
- (99) NR

**13.-** Now tell me, how much do you know or do you feel you know about the political events in Mexico? **[read options 1-4]:**

- (4) Very informed
- (3) Somewhat informed
- (2) A little informed
- (1) Not at all informed
- (99) NR

**14.-** How worried do you feel about the violence in Mexico? **[read options 1-4]:**

- (4) Very worried
- (3) Worried
- (2) A little worried
- (1) Not at all worried
- (99) NR

**15.-** As you surely know, there is some debate about the causes of political violence in Mexico. Some student movements and other organizations argue that the federal government is responsible for the increase in violence, while other groups believe that the violence is primarily a localized issue related to gangs and corruption at the local level. Regardless of your position, how likely are you to debate these issues with people who do not necessarily agree with you?

- (4) Very likely
- (3) Likely
- (2) A little likely
- (1) Not at all likely
- (99) NR

**16.-** On a scale of 1-4, where 1 means do not agree at all and 4 means completely agree, how strongly do you agree with the following statements:

	Do not agree at all			Completely agree	DK	NR
<b>m)</b> People like me have a voice in political discussions in Mexico	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>n)</b> For better or worse, the groups protesting organized violence are capable of changing things in Mexico	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>o)</b> In general, social movements have a powerful voice that can influence Mexican politics	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)
<b>p)</b> Politicians in Mexico care about what the public thinks	(1)	2	3	(4)	(98)	(99)

17. On a scale of 1-4, where 1 is very likely and 4 is very unlikely, how likely are you to do the following regarding organized crime in Mexico? (*read each option*)

	Muy Probable		Muy poco probable		Ns	Nc
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
a) Speak with friends and/or family about organized crime						
b) Read news about organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
c) Sign a petition demanding that the government take action against organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
d) Contact a politician to address the topic of organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
e) Participate in a protest against organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)
f) Vote for a candidate in the June 7th elections because of his position on organized crime	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(98)	(99)

18. Do you personally know anyone who has been a victim of organized crime?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (99) NR

19. Now can you tell me the highest level of education you have achieved?

- (1) None
- (2) Primary (Incomplete)
- (3) Primary (Complete)
- (4) Secondary (Incomplete)
- (5) Secondary (Complete)
- (6) Preparatory (Incomplete)
- (7) Preparatory (Complete)
- (8) University (Incomplete)
- (9) University (Complete)
- 10) Post-Graduate
- (11) NR

**20.-** I'm going to read you a list of things that people often have in their homes. Please tell me if you have the following items in your home: **(read options)**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
(1) Refrigerator	(1)	(2)
(2) Computer	(1)	(2)
(3) Washing machine	(1)	(2)
(4) Speaker system	(1)	(2)
(5) Cable television	(1)	(2)
(6) TV	(1)	(2)
(7) Radio	(1)	(2)
(8) Cell Phone	(1)	(2)
(9) Ipad	(1)	(2)
(10) Car	(1)	(2)

**As I mentioned earlier, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh would like you to participate in a second part of the study. This part of the study will involve a face-to-face interview (approximately 8 minutes long) next Sunday, on April 26th, at the Starbucks on Reforma (Paseo de la Reforma 250 on the corner with Niza). We would need you to arrive between 4-6 pm, at which point a team of clearly-identifiable interviewers from Beltrán y Asociados will offer you a coffee and conduct the interview. All attending participants will receive a gift card worth \$500 MX for Liverpool. This is not a promotion to sell you anything. The University of Pittsburgh would appreciate your attendance and will offer you an acknowledgement of participation.**

**Would you be able to attend the interview on Sunday, April 26th, at Starbucks on Reforma?**

**Yes (1)** Could you tell me your first name and a cellphone number or email address where we can contact you with a reminder?

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**If they do not have a cell phone or email address**

Is there anyone else in your household I can contact to remind you about the interview?

Register their information

\_\_\_\_\_

NR

**No (2)** We would like to know why you would not like to attend

Register their answer

\_\_\_\_\_

NR

**On behalf of the University of Pittsburgh and Beltrán y Asociados, Thank you very much for taking the time to answer our survey. Have a good day.**

If you would like to ask any questions or raise any concerns, please contact the project coordinator, Cassilde Schwartz ([movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com](mailto:movilizacionyopinion@gmail.com)) or call Leticia Juárez or Roberto Gómez (52113044).

## APPENDIX C: MULTILEVEL MODELS WITHOUT LAGGED DV

**Table C.1:**

<b>Multilevel Models without Lagged DV</b>				
<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>(1) Pooled</b>	<b>(2) Types</b>	<b>(3) Event Size</b>	<b>(4) City Size</b>
Male	0.317*** (0.045)	0.319*** (0.045)	0.318*** (0.045)	0.316*** (0.045)
Age	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)
Education	0.039*** (0.007)	0.039*** (0.007)	0.038*** (0.007)	0.038*** (0.007)
Ideology Dummy	0.202** (0.065)	0.196** (0.065)	0.194** (0.065)	0.206** (0.065)
Partisanship Dummy	0.544*** (0.041)	0.543*** (0.041)	0.543*** (0.041)	0.541*** (0.041)
Lula Approval (t-1)	0.031 (0.025)	0.028 (0.025)	0.028 (0.025)	0.034 (0.025)
External Efficacy (t-1)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.003 (0.011)	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.011)
Attention to News (t-1)	0.052* (0.021)	0.054* (0.021)	0.051* (0.021)	0.053* (0.021)
City Size	-0.120* (0.049)	-0.125** (0.048)	-0.107* (0.048)	-0.125** (0.047)
City Education	-0.366 (0.450)	-0.202 (0.445)	-0.246 (0.441)	-0.201 (0.437)
City Economic Index	0.090 (0.261)	0.059 (0.254)	0.041 (0.255)	0.104 (0.251)
Demonstrations	0.004 (0.002)			-0.222* (0.105)
Violent		-0.061 (0.041)		
Non-Violent		0.009* (0.004)		
Big			-0.126+ (0.075)	
Small/Medium			0.005* (0.003)	
City Size*Demonstrations				0.056* (0.026)

Constant	1.350*** (0.346)	1.255*** (0.341)	1.295*** (0.339)	1.252*** (0.337)
Observations	1,663	1,663	1,663	1,663
Number of groups	51	51	51	51

---

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10



## APPENDIX D: STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL FULL OUTPUT

**Table D.1.**

### **Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Interest and Demonstrations**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1) Interest 2	(2) Demonstrations 2	(3) Interest 3	(4) Demonstrations 3	(5) Interest 3	(6) Demonstrations 3
Interest 1	0.409*** -0.042	-0.095 -0.175			0.430*** -0.042	-0.066 -0.057
Demonstrations 1	-0.007 -0.007	1.020*** -0.179			0.005 -0.009	0.769*** -0.030
Interest 2			0.509*** -0.052	-0.151 -0.175		
Demonstrations 2			0.008+ -0.005	0.652*** -0.084		
Constant	1.260*** -0.093	0.353 -0.498	0.986*** -0.115	0.342 -0.490	1.175*** -0.096	-0.062 -0.158
Observations	1,896	1,896	1,896	1,896	1,900	1,900

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

**Table D.2.**

**Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Interest and Violent Protests**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Interest 2	Violent Protests 2	Interest 3	Violent Protests 3	Interest 3	Violent Protests 3
Interest 1	0.409***	-0.034			0.426***	0.004
	-0.042	-0.036			-0.043	-0.017
Violent Protests 1	-0.049	0.202***			-0.014	0.491***
	-0.032	-0.020			-0.039	-0.096
Interest 2			0.506***	-0.005		
			-0.053	-0.034		
Violent Protests 2			0.025	1.062+		
			-0.057	-0.584		
Constant	1.258***	0.122	1.016***	0.091	1.204***	0.017
	-0.088	-0.125	-0.116	-0.086	-0.096	-0.046
Observations	1,896	1,896	1,896	1,896	1900	1900

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

**Table D.3.**

**Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Interest and Non-Violent Protests**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Interest 2	Non- Violent Protests 2	Interest 3	Non- Violent Protests 3	Interest 3	Non- Violent Protests 3
Interest 1	0.409*** -0.042	-0.130 -0.150			0.431*** -0.042	-0.084 -0.070
Non-Violent Protests 1	-0.008 -0.008	1.405*** -0.201			0.006 -0.010	0.821*** -0.048
Interest 2			0.510*** -0.052	-0.093 -0.130		
Non-Violent Protests 2			0.007+ -0.004	0.518*** -0.074		
Constant	1.260*** -0.094	0.379 -0.471	0.981*** -0.116	0.159 -0.344	1.171*** -0.095	-0.079 -0.183
Observations	1,896	1,896	1,896	1,896	1900	1900

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

**Table D.4.**

**Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Interest and Big Protests**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1) Interest 2	(2) Big Protests 2	(3) Interest 3	(4) Big Protests 3	(5) Interest 3	(6) Big Protests 3
Interest 1	0.406*** -0.041	-0.015 -0.013			0.423*** -0.041	---
Big Protests 1	-0.139*** -0.014	0.034** -0.012			-0.089*** -0.018	---
Interest 2			1.023*** -0.296	---		
Big Protests 2			0.551 -0.478	---		
Constant	1.265*** -0.086	0.078 -0.048	-0.189 -0.693	---	1.218*** -0.089	---
Observations	1,896	1,896	1,896	1,896	1900	1900

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

**Table D.5.**

**Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Interest and Small/Medium Protests**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Interest 2	Small/Med Protests 2	Interest 3	Small/Med Protests 3	Interest 3	Small/Med Protests 3
Interest 1	0.410***	-0.092			0.431***	-0.082
	-0.042	-0.149			-0.042	-0.053
Small/Med Protests 1	-0.007	1.094***			0.006	0.814***
	-0.008	-0.144			-0.009	-0.024
Interest 2			0.509***	-0.149		
			-0.052	-0.176		
Small/Med Protests 2			0.008+	0.660***		
			-0.005	-0.084		
Constant	1.256***	0.224	0.985***	0.348	1.171***	-0.051
	-0.093	-0.405	-0.115	-0.488	-0.094	-0.139
Observations	1,896	1,896	1,896	1,896	1900	1900

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

**Table D.6.****Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Persuasion and Demonstrations**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1) Persuade 2	(2) Demonstra- tions 2	(3) Persuade 3	(4) Demonstra- tions 3	(5) Persuade 3	(6) Demonstra- tions 3
Persuade 1	0.285*** (0.053)	-0.057 (0.206)			0.336*** (0.051)	0.077 (0.061)
Demonstrations 1	0.001 (0.004)	1.019*** (0.181)			-0.011* (0.005)	0.771*** (0.029)
Persuade 2			0.303*** (0.047)	0.059+ (0.033)		
Demonstrations 2			-0.012* (0.006)	0.656*** (0.085)		
Constant	1.214*** (0.115)	0.241 (0.508)	1.281*** (0.101)	-0.072 (0.123)	1.218*** (0.110)	-0.338* (0.164)
Observations	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p&lt;0.001, \*\* p&lt;0.01, \* p&lt;0.05, + p&lt;0.10

**Table D.7.**

**Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Persuasion and Violent Protests**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1) Persuade 2	(2) Violent Protests 2	(3) Persuade 3	(4) Violent Protests 3	(5) Persuade 3	(6) Violent Protests 3
Persuade 1	0.286*** (0.052)	-0.025 (0.029)			0.336*** (0.050)	0.015 (0.021)
Violent Protests 1	0.012 (0.018)	0.201*** (0.020)			-0.070*** (0.015)	0.488*** (0.094)
Persuade 2			0.303*** (0.047)	0.005 (0.005)		
Violent Protests 2			-0.217+ (0.112)	1.050+ (0.575)		
Constant	1.211*** (0.109)	0.098 (0.103)	1.270*** (0.102)	0.071 (0.044)	1.210*** (0.104)	-0.001 (0.044)
Observations	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

**Table D.8.**

**Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Persuasion and Non-Violent Protests**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Persuade 2	Non- Violent Protests 2	Persuade 3	Non- Violent Protests 3	Persuade 3	Non- Violent Protests 3
Persuade 1	0.285*** (0.053)	-0.216 (0.263)			0.336*** (0.052)	0.062 (0.073)
Non-Violent Protests 1	0.001 (0.005)	1.404*** (0.203)			-0.013* (0.006)	0.825*** (0.048)
Persuade 2			0.302*** (0.047)	0.043 (0.030)		
Non-Violent Protests 2			-0.010* (0.005)	0.522*** (0.073)		
Constant	1.215*** (0.116)	0.475 (0.659)	1.284*** (0.101)	-0.110 (0.090)	1.219*** (0.111)	-0.365* (0.171)
Observations	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10



**Table D.9**

**Cross-Lagged SEM of Political Persuasion and Small/Medium Protests**

	3-Wave Estimates				2-Wave Estimates	
	(1) Persuade 2	(2) Small/Med Protests 2	(3) Persuade 3	(4) Small/Med Protests 3	(5) Persuade 3	(6) Small/Med Protests 3
Persuade 1	0.285*** (0.053)	-0.101 (0.187)			0.337*** (0.051)	0.043 (0.063)
Small/Med Protests 1	0.001 (0.005)	1.094*** (0.146)			-0.012* (0.005)	0.818*** (0.024)
Persuade 2			0.303*** (0.047)	0.058+ (0.032)		
Small/Med Protests 2			-0.012* (0.006)	0.664*** (0.086)		
Constant	1.216*** (0.115)	0.191 (0.435)	1.282*** (0.102)	-0.061 (0.122)	1.215*** (0.110)	-0.304+ (0.177)
Observations	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869	1,869

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10

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